

Level 4 Human in a Ruined World #Chapter 261 - Read

Level 4 Human in a Ruined World Chapter 261

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Chapter 261: The Greatest Worry (3)

“What... what?”

Jeong Taeryong, the eldest of the Five Masters of Anshan, could sense it.

He realized that everyone in Anshan, including himself, had become embroiled in something huge.

“Twenty million, you say? What does that mean?”

The sudden mention of a huge sum of money made Jeong Taeryong's face pale with fear.

He was scared of this mad Strongest Sword suddenly talking about money and the purple demon rushing towards them from the other side.

In the midst of all this, the bald swordsman, Sung Hwigwang, the third of the Five Brothers, unsheathed his sword without hesitation.

“Hyung! I think we need to kill that thing first!”

What Hwigwang pointed at with his sword was none other than the old monster approaching from the west.

Unlike the Strongest Sword, with whom they were at least conversing, the monster was already in battle mode and rushing towards them.

Then one of the Five Masters of Anshan recognized the monster's face.

“Huh? Baek Gangryang?”

He was too famous to be mistaken.

Baek Gangryang, 68 years old.

He had previously served as the mayor of Beijing and the representative of the Communist Party.

Until just before the reset, he held a seat on the Politburo Standing Committee.

In other words, he was one of the top ten figures in the vast Chinese political sphere.

It was akin to the current prime minister or the ruling party leader returning as a monster in Korea.

And soon,

“What?”

“It’s Baek Gangryang!”

The citizens of Anshan who had gathered nearby also recognized him and started murmuring.

The reason was...

Thud, thud!

Baek Gangryang's body was somewhat unusual.

Before the reset, he had a severely obese body, and even now, as a monster, it was the same.

Crash!

His body, strong enough to tear up the ground as he moved, looked like a huge jar.

The bizarre part was that most of this jar-shaped body was composed of muscles.

‘What, what is that? How is that even possible?’

Even Yeongwoo, who had seen all kinds of monsters, was bewildered by the structure of his body.

It was a body one couldn't have without over-investing in karma for physical transformation.

Moreover, this current Standing Committee member held a weapon, unlike the previously deceased Zhang Jinshan.

‘Oh!’

To Yeongwoo, the weapon seemed purely like loot.

Whirr!

It was a very heavy-looking crescent moon blade.

The blade part was about twice as large as a regular crescent moon blade, making it more like a kitchen knife with a long handle.

“I am Baek Gangryang, the 4th Standing Committee member of the Politburo!”

The Standing Committee member introduced himself without fail.

Then,

“Chairman Im Dupyeong wants military contributions! Anshan city must comply...!”

He demanded money while throwing the crescent moon blade he was holding.

Flash!

Right in the middle of the standoff between the Five Masters of Anshan and Yeongwoo.

Boom!

‘...Why is he throwing a weapon here? Is he crazy?’

Yeongwoo found Baek Gangryang's actions puzzling, but the Five Masters of Anshan seemed to have a different take.

“Wh-what kind of sword is that big?”

“Is he really Baek Gangryang...?”

“Is Chairman Im alive?”

When a person appearing as Baek Gangryang showed up as a demon, they naturally believed in the survival of Chairman Im as well.

At this point, the cities' tendencies diverged. Earlier, Dalian City's Tian Zhulin had a dispute with the Standing Committee member Zhang Jinshan.

- Ha, the Politburo? The party no longer exists, so how can you use the name of the Politburo?

- You insolent wench! How dare you deny the existence of the party!

Tian Zhulin of Dalian Sword Guild's stance was that she could not acknowledge the existing party since all systems and laws had collapsed due to the reset.

On the other hand, for the Five Masters of Anshan,

"Chairman Im...!"

"Oh my god."

Two of the five brothers had knelt before the sword Baek Gangryang threw.

'What, these idiots.'

Yeongwoo couldn't understand it, but the name Im Dupyeong had a tremendous impact on those who had been under the government's control for a long time.

His name signified not just a single national chairman but the entire solid system centered around the party.

Additionally, Baek Gangryang, who appeared as Chairman Im's proxy, knew how to dominate the masses.

Swoosh.

"I will give the right to speak only to those who can lift this sword."

Baek Gangryang pointed at the crescent moon blade he had thrown with his thick fingers.

Consequently, everyone in the hall, including the Five Masters of Anshan, looked at the sword in question.

"...Ugh."

"Can we even hold that properly?"

"It looks incredibly heavy..."

The crescent moon blade that Baek Gangryang had brought was so massive that even wrapping one's hand around its handle seemed difficult.

The sheer weight of the blade was evident from the shockwave and thunderous sound it created when it hit the ground.

Therefore, everyone could easily imagine how strong Baek Gangryang must be to wield it as if it were part of his own body.

“...Hyung, it seems that...”

Even the third brother, Sung Hwigwang, who wasn't scared of the Strongest Sword who had shot laser cannons at the city, trembled at the mere mention of Im Dupyeong's name.

He urged their eldest brother, Jeong Taeryong, to surrender.

However, Jeong Taeryong was a consistent man.

Just as he did not bestow the title of “cooperation” on the Great Demon Jeong Yeongwoo, he did not bend before the Standing Committee member Baek Gangryang, who came with Im Dupyeong's name.

“It is an honor to have you visit Anshan. We have the privilege of meeting many esteemed guests today.”

As Jeong Taeryong spoke without even making a polite gesture, Baek Gangryang approached until his shadow fell at Jeong Taeryong's feet.

Thud, thud!

Then, revealing his gray, dry teeth, he again pointed at the crescent moon blade.

“Stop talking nonsense and lift that. If you open your mouth without lifting it again, I'll crush your skull.”

This was clearly not an idle threat.

To take control of the city, he needed an example to make a point, and that example had become Jeong Taeryong, who had dared to stand out.

“Hmm.”

“...Hyung.”

Everyone expected something unfortunate to happen when someone grabbed that crescent moon blade.

Indeed, purple demonic energy continued to seep out of the blade.

So, inevitably,

Tap.

While everyone focused on Jeong Taeryong, Yeongwoo touched the crescent moon blade.

“If I lift this, I can speak, right?”

Then, suddenly, everyone in the hall looked at Yeongwoo.

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“Huh!”

“What...”

At that moment, Yeongwoo had already grasped the crescent moon blade with one hand.

Although the handle was designed for Baek Gangryang’s overly large hands, making it impossible for Yeongwoo to grip it properly,

Crunch!

He could lift it purely with his strength.

Because just a moment ago, Yeongwoo had

『Character: Jeong Yeongwoo07』

[Strength] 7,500 (19+7,481)

[Endurance] 6,248 (21+6,227)

[Durability] 7,398 (13+7,385)

[Sensory] 3,400 (24+3,376)

|Fire Resistance: 15% 【Osmosis 50%】

|Ice Resistance: 15% 【Osmosis 50%】

|Lightning Resistance: 15% 【Osmosis 50%】

|Poison Resistance: 15% 【Osmosis 50%】

|Ability Resistance: 50%

|Dragon Resistance: 10%

spent a whopping 40 million karma on his stats.

He had invested 20 million in strength and 10 million each in endurance and durability. Knowing that the opponent was the 4th Standing Committee member, potentially stronger than the 6th Standing Committee member Zhang Jinshan, he had preemptively boosted his stats.

And that judgment seemed to have hit the mark.

‘Wow, it really is heavy. This guy is a total strength character.’

As Yeongwoo awkwardly held the crescent moon blade with his left hand, the Five Masters of Anshan all looked at Baek Gangryang.

They needed to see his reaction to decide which side to take.

The expression on Baek Gangryang's face, as everyone's gaze shifted to him, was

“Huh...?”

Utterly bewildered.

But he wasn't just surprised that the opponent had lifted that heavy crescent moon blade.

“How, how on earth...”

That blade was a weapon imbued with demonic power, personally bestowed by Chairman Im.

It was a weapon that only those who walked the path of demons could hold.

Because,

“What is this? A self-harming weapon?”

As Yeongwoo was observing now, this weapon had the trait of inflicting Ability damage on its wielder.

「Dark Slash」 - Transformed Crescent Moon Blade

【While using this weapon, you will continuously take Ability damage.】

【Adds 25% of the Ability damage taken in the last 2 seconds to your attack power.】

【Increases Ability attribute damage by 10%.】

However, since Yeongwoo had 50% Ability resistance and his recovery ability had long surpassed human levels, his body wasn't falling apart.

'What's with this bizarre option?'

Clearly, a weapon designed for villains.

And only Yeongwoo could fully understand the potential of the second option.

Even the potential of the second option was something only Yeongwoo could grasp.

【Adds 25% of the Ability damage taken in the last 2 seconds to your attack power.】

'Isn't this a weapon for fighting extraterrestrial beings?'

Based on his past experiences, the source of Ability attributes was somewhere beyond outer space.

Hence, if he were to fight otherworldly beings in the future, a significant portion of the damage he would receive from them would be Ability.

"You've been using an extremely good weapon, haven't you?"

When Yeongwoo swung the "Dark Slash" twice in the air, Baek Gangryang, who had maintained a stern demeanor, instinctively reached out his hand but then retracted it.

Swoosh.

It was as if he wanted Yeongwoo to return the weapon now.

However, instead of handing it back, Yeongwoo smiled wickedly and opened his weapon catalog.

Flash!

In a way, this was also a form of asymmetric warfare unique to Yeongwoo.

Only he could make the weapon disappear like magic right there and then.

'Register weapon.'

As soon as Yeongwoo registered the "Dark Slash" in his weapon catalog, the massive crescent moon blade in his hand suddenly vanished without a trace.

“What?”

“Huh?”

And, of course, the most surprised person was,

“You son of a bitch!”

Baek Gangryang, who had just lost the weapon bestowed upon him by Im Dupyeong right in front of his eyes.

Grind.

He was so furious that his gray teeth ground together, making a terrifying noise.

However, he couldn't bring himself to crush Yeongwoo's head.

Because,

“Where did you send my weapon? What kind of sorcery is this?”

He suddenly realized that if he killed this mysterious intruder, he might never recover the weapon.

After all, it hadn't been put in a pocket; it had disappeared into thin air.

“Do you want to know? Where did the Dark Slash go?”

When Yeongwoo asked this and stared at him, Baek Gangryang had no choice.

“.....”

He quietly nodded.

So, Yeongwoo turned to the citizens of Anshan, who had filled the area by now, and said,

“Alright, then, Commissioner! Let's reveal it publicly to the citizens! How much did you plan to extort from Anshan every day?”

“What?”

Baek Gangryang swelled his muscles all over in rage, but Yeongwoo's next words held him back.

“Wasn’t it money you were going to collect anyway? If you speak the truth, I will return the weapon immediately. I seek a fair duel.”

Yeongwoo had not drawn his sword yet, so his words matched his actions for now.

However, Baek Gangryang did not trust him.

He also sensed that he had fallen into quite a deep pit.

But what could he do?

No one but this guy knew where the missing weapon was.

‘If the worst comes to worst, I’ll just kill him. I’ll find it even if I have to rip his stomach open.’

Baek Gangryang, having resolved himself internally, finally revealed the amount Im Dupyeong had ordered to be extorted from Anshan in front of the public.

“Forty million. Starting today, we plan to collect forty million karma every day.”

“What did you say?”

“Forty million?”

“Is that even possible?”

The citizens of Anshan were shocked, their mouths agape at the enormous extortion amount, and Yeongwoo was no different.

‘These guys are total extortionists, aren’t they? Are they planning to take forty million every day? Even other places are only being asked for thirty million.’

For some reason, Im Dupyeong had decided to squeeze the lifeblood out of Anshan.

‘This is truly insane.’

This couldn’t go on.

Yeongwoo took a step forward toward the public with a seemingly outraged expression.

“Ha, forty million every day? Isn’t that too harsh? Has the moral righteousness of the martial world fallen to such a low level?”

Then, he raised three fingers toward the Five Masters of Anshan, who were swallowing dryly.

“I’ll take thirty million! If you give me thirty million karma daily, I’ll ensure you don’t have to pay that exorbitant sum.”

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Chapter 262: The Greatest Worry (4)

“What, what did you say?”

“30 million...?”

With Yeongwoo’s shocking statement, not only were the members of the Five Masters of Anshan and the residents stunned, but even Standing Committee member Baek Gangryang was left speechless.

“What, you little punk?”

The money he was supposed to collect was 40 million, yet someone right next to him was calling for 30 million—wasn’t this breaking the code of conduct?

“You, you... who exactly are you?”

Baek Gangryang was so flustered that he started to stutter, realizing for the first time that this young, green boy was a rival to President Im Dupyeong.

And it wasn’t just the Five Masters of Anshan’s side that was flabbergasted.

“Hey, didn’t you just say...”

Jeong Taeryong, the eldest of the Five Masters of Anshan, trailed off.

He had clearly heard it earlier.

That he was supposed to get 20 million—that’s what the Strongest Sword had told him.

“The Standing Committee member will explain everything! Why I should receive 20 million!”

‘But why is it 30 million now?’

As the focus faded from Jeong Taeryong's eyes, the Strongest Sword raised his sword towards the sky and shouted.

"Will you just stand by and watch Im Dupyeong try to become a dictator again? Protests or coups can't change the regime anymore. The more money you pay, Im Dupyeong's invincibility will become stronger! He's already probably bulletproof!"

"...!"

Yeongwoo's terrifying warning struck the hearts of many people forcefully.

In fact, China's situation wasn't much different before the reset either.

Im Dupyeong, who had completed a solid dictatorship long ago, was already virtually bulletproof before the reset.

No one dared to aim a gun at him.

But at least today, in this moment, there was an opportunity.

Someone had appeared who dared to point a sword at Im Dupyeong.

"Im Dupyeong...! He's not invincible yet! He can still be killed now!"

As Yeongwoo wildly swung his sword in the air, inciting the people, Baek Gangryang, realizing something was very wrong, growled with a menacing expression.

"Are you all out of your minds? Remember, the price of treason is a brutal death!"

"Ah...!"

Some people flinched at this, but Yeongwoo immediately seized the atmosphere again by shouting a new slogan.

"Only 30 million to overthrow the dictatorship!"

As Yeongwoo glared at Baek Gangryang with this cry, Baek Gangryang smirked.

"Aren't you also just after the people's taxes, yet you talk about overthrowing dictatorship...?"

Baek Gangryang, a veteran who had been through countless battles in Chinese politics, saw the young man before him as nothing more than a particularly noisy insect.

The only problem was.

“Haha, you know the term ‘taxes’. At least you understand what it means?”

Jeong Yeongwoo was an enormous and powerful insect.

Swish!

Finally, Yeongwoo turned confidently towards the citizens of Anshan.

“Everyone, isn’t the lesser evil better than the worst? I’ll show you right now! The value of 30 million for one day...!”

With these words, Yeongwoo once again pulled out ‘Dark Slash’ from his weapon collection, causing Baek Gangryang’s eyes to widen.

“You brat!”

Baek Gangryang’s heart began to race.

He thought it was finally time to tear apart this eyesore of a kid.

Now that the weapon had reappeared, he had to kill this madman quickly and everything would be solved.

But he didn’t know.

That this madman would suddenly throw the Dark Slash into the air.

“I’m returning the weapon as promised!”

“What?”

Before Baek Gangryang could even shout out in surprise, the Dark Slash soared into the air with a heavy sound.

Swish!

As a result, Baek Gangryang had no choice but to look up reflexively. He had to roll his eyes to follow the movement of the Dark Slash.

And in that moment, Yeongwoo.

Tap!

Ran towards his opponent at lightning speed, changing his martial arts technique.

He removed ‘Call of God’ and replaced it with ‘Rohm’s Bottom’.

Immediately, a purple hologram appeared in front of him, and at the same time, the mark of 'Strongest Sword Technique' was displayed.

Two martial arts skills equipped in two separate slots were operating simultaneously.

'What, this works?'

Currently, Yeongwoo's highest-level sword technique, the Strongest Sword Technique, and the combat technique from another world, Rohm's Bottom.

Yeongwoo was in a state with no openings.

Maybe that was why.

Thwack!

As soon as Baek Gangryang looked up at the Dark Slash, Yeongwoo's fist slammed unerringly into his Adam's apple.

"Ugh!"

In that moment, Yeongwoo realized.

'I might actually be able to beat him to death!'

He could feel the texture of the opponent's flesh with the punch he had just landed.

His strength was sufficient to penetrate deep into the enemy's muscles.

'Although my fist hurts a bit.'

It was encouraging to know that close combat was possible even against such a powerful opponent.

Showing that he could engage in close quarters with such a 'power character' would appeal to the clients.

They would think that paying 30 million was not a waste.

'It's not a small amount, so I must prove it's worth it.'

Although he was extorting money for the prosperity of his country, he didn't want to deceive the people giving the money, his employers.

After all, this money represented the Chinese people's desire to prevent Im Dupyeong's second dictatorship.

Therefore, it was only right to fulfill that desire and, if possible, show them hope.

The hope and expectation that the person they hired could indeed defeat Im Dupyeong.

And the satisfaction of spending their money well.

“Baek Gangryang! For the crime of aiding Im Dupyeong’s dictatorship, I sentence you to death in the name of the people...!”

“What, what?”

Still clutching his throat, Baek Gangryang stepped back, seeing the Strongest Sword’s eyes half-crazed as he dashed forward like lightning.

“Why... why are you going to such lengths? You’re not even Chinese!”

While Baek Gangryang, flustered, assumed a combat stance, Yeongwoo suddenly lowered himself and launched a super-speed tackle.

“If you’re going to take money from someone else’s pocket, you need to go this far!”

Crash!

An extreme business tactic tackle.

But Baek Gangryang, being the 4th Standing Committee member, had incredible reaction speed.

As Yeongwoo lowered his upper body and lunged at his lower body, Baek Gangryang pressed down on Yeongwoo’s shoulder with his right hand while pulling his lower body back.

This was the textbook tackle defense called a sprawl.

‘Does this old man know wrestling?’

Yeongwoo realized that his opponent also had martial arts skills similar to Rohm’s Bottom.

These movements weren’t part of swordsmanship.

And then.

Flash!

A purple flash appeared in front of Yeongwoo’s eyes.

It was a warning of Baek Gangryang's impending knee strike.

'Yikes!'

If he took that hit, his skull might hold, but his cervical spine would break.

With his shoulder already pinned, Yeongwoo had no choice but to survive the round with 'temporal items.'

Boom!

「Self-Destruct」 - Mutated Bracelet

【Causes a powerful explosion.】

【Increases durability by 300.】

Using the self-destruct feature of the bracelet, he created distance from his opponent.

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"Ugh, this bug is full of strange tricks..."

As Baek Gangryang made a disgusted face at Yeongwoo's surprising explosion show, swift movements emanated from within the dust cloud.

Swish!

It was none other than Yeongwoo's left jab.

Thwack!

"Ugh!"

Thanks to the dust cloud obscuring his vision, the first jab landed squarely on Baek Gangryang's face.

But the second jab that followed.

Swish!

"You think I'm a fool?"

Was immediately blocked by Baek Gangryang.

Whack!

He swung his arm and grabbed Yeongwoo's left elbow.

He caught the opponent's forearm instead of dodging or blocking the punch—a very clever move.

This way, he could completely block the third and fourth jabs.

“Hehe, I'll make sure you can never use this arm again.”

Thinking he had finally gained the upper hand, Baek Gangryang smirked evilly.

Then he immediately applied pressure with his grip.

Crunch!

Yeongwoo's left elbow shattered like a twig, with bone fragments piercing through the flesh.

“Oh?”

Seeing his own elbow smashed pitifully, Yeongwoo's eyes widened.

The shattered joint caused the broken ends of the upper and lower arm bones to protrude through the skin and cross each other, resembling...

"... 「Dogo」 ?"

The marks of the Dogo wedge.

“What did you say?”

While Baek Gangryang's pupils dilated at the sudden, transcendent word lodged in his brain, venomous blood flowed from Yeongwoo's forearm.

Sizzle!

At the same moment, icons indicating bleeding and bodily damage appeared in Yeongwoo's view.

Finally, Yeongwoo's combat power approached its maximum output.

He then proclaimed the start of the advertisement.

“This battle is brought to you by the pan-galactic weapon brand, Dogo!”

“...?”

“I am Jeong Yeongwoo07, elected representative of the Korean Peninsula and master of the Bastard!”

At the same time, Baek Gangryang let out a thunderous scream.

“Aaaargh!”

His fingers, which were gripping the Strongest Sword's elbow, began to melt.

Because it wasn't supernatural damage, the venom effect manifested fully.

“That hurts, doesn't it?”

“You...!”

Reacting to Yeongwoo's words, Baek Gangryang instinctively glanced at the weapon that had flown away, the Dark Slash.

There, he saw the large crescent blade embedded in the ground in the distance.

However, his relief was short-lived.

Riiip!

A moment later, a tremendous pain surged through his abdomen.

The problem was that the Strongest Sword had used his shattered left elbow... no, the bone shards to stab Baek Gangryang's stomach.

“Aaaagh!”

As his intestines spilled out, Baek Gangryang screamed in agony, and the onlooking Anshan Five Masters and over a thousand citizens also screamed and recoiled.

The problem-solving method of the supposed demon from the Korean Peninsula was quite different from what they had imagined.

Could it be that he intended to kill Im Dupyeong similarly?

Judging by what he was doing now, it seemed entirely possible.

Thud!

Next, Jeong Yeongwoo delivered a right uppercut to Baek Gangryang's chin and then stabbed his now sharper left elbow bone into Baek Gangryang's throat.

Thrust!

"Baek Gangryang, I sentence you to death!"

Even in this chaos, Yeongwoo didn't forget that his battle was a 30 million-a-day contract job.

"...Grrrk."

The 4th Standing Committee member, with his throat pierced by the venom-coated bone shards, rolled his eyes and collapsed backward.

Thud!

And then, soon.

Ssshhh!

Just like the previously deceased Zhang Jinshan, a purple miasma shot toward Beijing.

It was still unclear whether this meant their power was being reclaimed or merely signaling their death.

What mattered was.

'That's the second one.'

Two of Im Dupyeong's lieutenants, the Standing Committee members, were now gone.

So, Im Dupyeong must have started to feel it by now.

The strength of the sudden competitor disrupting his supply lines was quite formidable.

'So, what now? Are you going to make a move yourself?'

Yeongwoo glanced in the direction of Beijing and then tried to check the time, but he couldn't.

His left wrist was lying over there where he wore his watch.

"...Damn."

As Yeongwoo made a face, showing his predicament, and started walking toward his severed wrist, someone quickly approached.

Tap, tap!

When Yeongwoo turned his head towards the source of the sound, he was surprised to see Jeong Taeryong of the Anshan Five Brotherhood handing him a watch.

“Please use my watch.”

“Ah, thank you, but I can use mine.”

After saying this, Yeongwoo tried to retrieve his own wrist.

However, Jeong Taeryong insisted, offering his watch again.

“You don’t need to bow before us, Great Hero!”

“Oh.”

He had finally called him a Great Hero.

Yeongwoo blinked, wondering if he had heard it wrong, then sighed softly and gestured for Jeong Taeryong to step aside.

“No, I still need to bend down to pick up my wrist.”

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 263: The Greatest Worry (5)

Everyone in the hall was shocked three times.

First, when Jeong Yeongwoo calmly picked up his severed wrist from the floor.

And then again...

Poof!

...when he forcibly reattached that wrist to his shattered forearm.

“What, what are you doing?”

“Does he think just sticking it back will work?”

Even though this was a world where demons roamed freely after the reset, some common sense remained.

For instance, severed body parts wouldn't reattach properly without special measures, and being impaled through the chest usually meant death.

However, Yeongwoo was far beyond the common sense of this world.

Sssrrp.

“Oh, oh?”

“No way... is that...”

The crowd, watching the absolute demon from the Korean Peninsula, stood with their mouths agape.

It was unbelievable, but it was happening right before their eyes.

The lower arm, which Yeongwoo had seemingly just stuck on, started to meld with the elbow.

The bone fragments sticking out of the torn skin gradually began to find their places.

Crunch, crack!

A gruesome sound echoed through the hall as the shattered bone pushed aside ligaments and muscle tissue to return to its original position.

“Master...?”

Jeong Taeryong of the Five Masters of Anshan, who had stepped forward to welcome ‘Master Jeong,’ hesitated and then stopped in his tracks.

That's how shocking Yeongwoo's 'recovery show' was.

“My god.”

“...Unbelievable.”

As everyone was in shock, Yeongwoo calmly lifted his left wrist with his right hand to check the time.

“I should get going.”

“Where are you going so suddenly? How about a meal with us...”

Jeong Taeryong, coming to his senses, hurried to invite the guest into the city, but it was already nearing six in the evening.

‘Even if I leave for Seoul right now, I’ll only arrive at midnight.’

But that wasn’t all for today.

Before returning to Seoul, he had to stop by Dalian to collect the promised money.

Once in Seoul, he would receive defense funds brought by the Strongest Swords from various places...

‘Then I have to enter the night dungeon.’

Therefore, if possible, he needed to make time for some rest.

“Let’s leave the meal for another time. Today, the whole city is likely to be quite busy.”

“Huh? What do you mean by that...”

As Jeong Taeryong looked puzzled, Yeongwoo quietly showed three fingers.

“...Oh, right.”

Thirty million.

That was the cost for Anshan City not to turn this demon into their enemy. But as everyone had just seen, this man had tremendous power. He might even have the strength to defeat Im Dupyeong.

“Preparing the mentioned amount shouldn’t be a big problem. But...”

Jeong Taeryong added that gathering thirty million in cash would take some time.

Yeongwoo nodded as if he had expected this.

“I’d love to wait and have tea while you collect it, but it can’t be helped.”

Yeongwoo waved his hand, calling Negwig.

The horse, waiting with two alien slaves on its back, clattered its metal hooves and approached.

“I will return tomorrow afternoon. You can give me sixty million in a lump sum then.”

Sixty million.

This was the agreed pay for two days of the highest rank service but gathered in this way; it seemed much larger.

“Oh... You mean you’ll take today’s money and tomorrow’s together?”

“Yes. If it’s too much to pay all at once, you’d have to bring the money to Seoul directly, which might be difficult in terms of time.”

This was because unusual weather would arrive at night.

“Understood. Then, we’ll deliver sixty million tomorrow.”

As Jeong Taeryong made a promise with a bow, Yeongwoo returned the gesture with his still awkward stance.

“Stay healthy until tomorrow... and take good care of the tribute.”

Saying this, Yeongwoo leaped onto Negwig, who had approached.

Leap!

Then, waving his left arm, which had mostly healed, he bid farewell to the citizens of Anshan.

“See you again!”

In turn, the citizens, still looking stunned, waved back at Yeongwoo.

* * *

Heading south again.

Yeongwoo drove Negwig at full speed toward Dalian.

The city where Dalian Swordmaster Tian Zhulin was likely waiting with twenty million in cash.

“Kept your promise, I hope?”

When Yeongwoo muttered worriedly, the golden goblin in the back seat made an unintelligible noise.

- Kitt!

It was unclear whether it implied that humans couldn't be trusted or if it was excited about sweeping up a large amount of coins again.

In any case, if Dalian City hadn't prepared the money...

'Then what should I do? Fight Tian Zhulin?'

Although Yeongwoo had threatened that he would come for the money, he hadn't thought through what he would do if they hadn't prepared it.

If he were indeed a demon to the core, he might have caused a massacre in Dalian as a warning.

But Yeongwoo was just a particularly notorious 'freak,' not a tremendous demon or a villain.

'Of course, my accumulated evil deeds are superhuman.'

Thus, he wanted to avoid anything significantly increasing his tally of evil deeds.

After all, reducing his evil deeds to near zero was one of his long-term goals.

Quaaaat, quaaaat!

Soon, the sight of Dalian City began to appear in the distance.

'Almost there.'

For Tian Zhulin, Yeongwoo's return might not be very welcome.

Especially since he hadn't stopped by Tongliao City, which Dalian had recommended.

There must have been a reason for recommending that faraway city.

"Swordmaster Tian! Is the money ready?"

When Yeongwoo shouted from the city's outskirts, a swift presence emerged from the front at the right time.

'Dalian Swordmaster.'

It was none other than Tian Zhulin, the guardian of Dalian City.

"Keep it down. Everyone can hear you."

Sure enough, Swordmaster Tian did not look pleased. In contrast, Yeongwoo looked troubled when he saw her empty-handed.

“Where’s the money?”

“It’s being brought. Did you think I would carry that much money myself?”

Tian Zhulin pointed somewhere inside the city.

It probably meant that those designated as the transport team were bringing the money bags.

Yeongwoo tilted his head.

“That won’t do.”

“Why... why not?”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

“Starting tomorrow, you must bring the money to the Korean Peninsula. Specifically, we’ve set up a brokerage in Incheon.”

Yeongwoo explained that it would be safest if the strongest person in Dalian, Tian Zhulin, personally transported the money.

As expected, she exploded in anger.

“This crazy bastard! It’s not enough that you’re extorting money; now you want me to deliver it personally?”

Tian Zhulin’s knuckles cracked as she clenched and unclenched her fists.

Her pride as a Chinese citizen and her responsibility as the city’s protector were in conflict.

Normally, she would have challenged this demon to a duel on the spot, but Dalian City was effectively held hostage.

Beijing’s Im Dupyeong problem would be one step closer if she drove him away.

Thus, from her perspective, making a pact with either side meant the same thing—succumbing to evil.

“Sigh...”

Tian Zhulin took a deep breath and closed her eyes briefly.

“I’m sorry for the harsh words. I went too far.”

“It’s okay. I’m used to it. If I get the money, you can curse me all you want.”

“...Damn it.”

Tian Zhulin let out a dry laugh, just as two swordsmen carrying large backpacks appeared from inside the city.

They were the transport team Tian Zhulin had mentioned.

“This is the promised twenty million.”

“Great.”

Yeongwoo jumped down from Negwig in delight, and Tian Zhulin finally noticed his left arm’s condition.

“What happened to your arm? Did Tongliao give you trouble?”

“No, it was too far, so I couldn’t go.”

“What? Then where did you go?”

Tian Zhulin was shocked.

Yeongwoo pointed northeast.

“The only place I could get to on time was Anshan.”

“Did you extort money there too?”

“Extort money? I won their hearts, even losing my arm in the process.”

Yeongwoo lifted his left arm slightly.

Then he had the goblin pack the money bags onto the transport team’s backpacks.

-Kikit!

As a result, Yeongwoo’s total karma holdings shot up to a staggering 68 million.

Available Karma: 68,492,500

Of course, ten million of this needed to be returned to Shandong Province.

‘So that leaves about 58 million... still a lot. The money never seems to run out.’

However, due to the rapid increase in income, the likelihood of increased taxes was significant, so he couldn’t afford to be careless.

Normally, collecting money spread across the planet shouldn’t incur additional taxes, but the amount was substantial enough to raise potential issues.

‘In a way, this is mercenary work... depending on the viewpoint, it could be considered business income.’

Yeongwoo watched as the goblin finished packing the money into the interdimensional bag.

“All set? Is the amount correct? twenty million?”

-Kiit!

The goblin gave a thumbs up with its small hand in affirmation.

“...”

It was unclear whether this gesture was learned from top-tier warriors or if it was a universal gesture in the universe, but it indicated the amount was correct.

“Let’s go. We don’t have time.”

As Yeongwoo mounted Negwig again and took the reins, Tian Zhulin asked urgently.

“What about tomorrow? Do we send the money to Incheon?”

“Yes. Whether you come personally or send someone else, it should be someone with significant martial prowess. You’ll have to gather the money again if the tribute gets stolen.”

With this brief advice, Yeongwoo sped south.

It was time to return ten million karma to Shandong Province and return to Seoul.

* * *

At 6:14 PM, as Yeongwoo approached Yantai in Shandong Province, the Shandong Twin Evils, who had confirmed his territorial mark, greeted him early.

“Master...”

It was the voice of Shandong's First Evil, Zhang Jaham.

Yeongwoo assumed they were preparing for their usual excessive welcome, but...

“Master Jeong! Please hurry!”

Upon hearing Shandong Second Evil Wu Qingjin's voice, Yeongwoo grew cautious.

He sensed the urgency and significant fear in Wu Qingjin's shout.

‘What's going on? Has Beijing already started retaliation?’

It was quite possible.

If true, it was a miracle both Shandong Twin Evils were still alive.

‘Fortunately, I'm not too late.’

If so, who among the State Council members is in Shandong now?

Since the Fourth Member was dead, it was likely someone ranked third or higher.

With these thoughts, Yeongwoo asked Zhang Jaham and Wu Qingjin.

“Why are you so tense? Is someone here in Shandong?”

The two middle-aged men nodded with relieved expressions.

“You knew, as expected?”

“Indeed... you're no ordinary person!”

Yeongwoo cleared his throat and asked nonchalantly.

“Who exactly is here?”

Zhang Jaham cautiously answered with a bow.

“Well... I don't know his name.”

“...Name?”

Yeongwoo's expression hardened slightly.

Zhang Jaham, who had bet on Yeongwoo's side, would never refer to a State Council member as 'name,' nor would he be unaware of their name.

The common practice when these officials visited was to announce their rank and name.

In other words, the guest in Shandong wasn't a State Council member but...

"Could it be..."

"Yes. He's from the National Tax Service. He said you'd understand."

"Oh."

Yeongwoo's greatest concern had arrived in Shandong.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 264: Honest Tax Payment (1)

National Tax Service.

Here, the 'national' refers to the nation.

In other words, it means the organization that manages the nation's taxes.

So, if the person here in Shandong Province really was an employee of the National Tax Service...

'Does that mean there are nations in space too? Isn't that a bit nonsensical?'

Of course, it wasn't strange since there was a tax-collecting authority, official documents, and a world where forgery could land you in prison.

However, the idea that Earth is part of some nation in space?

That was hard to grasp.

As far as Yeongwoo knew, Earth had existed as an independent planet until now.

'Is everything messed up because of that reset? Why do things keep coming in from outside?'

Yeongwoo took out the 'Fearful Cat' to determine the entity's position.

But the cat remained calm, eyes closed, pointing nowhere.

It meant there were no threats nearby.

"Where is this so-called National Tax Service employee?"

So, when Yeongwoo asked directly, Zhang Jaham led the way.

"This way, please. We've brought him to the office building."

"Let's hurry. I need to wrap this up quickly and head back."

He really wanted to ignore any intergalactic official business and just rest.

But it was about taxes, after all.

If you valued your life, tax payment was one thing you couldn't delay in this universe.

'These crazy people, coming all the way here when I'm busy. They could've just sent a notice.'

Grumbling to himself, Yeongwoo followed Zhang Jaham to Yantai City Hall.

As they walked, he instructed Wu Qingjin to bring the money.

"Ten million karma."

"...What?"

"Bring the money. I was supposed to receive twenty million in Shandong, right? So I'll return the remaining ten million."

"What?"

Wu Qingjin's jaw dropped at Yeongwoo's words.

Then,

Whack!

As always, he fell to his knees and fist saluted on the ground.

“Great Hero...!”

Seeing this, Yeongwoo quickly stopped Zhang Jaham from kneeling too.

“We don’t have time, so just guide us.”

Then he told the Golden Goblin to fetch the bag with ten million karma.

“Take it to him and ensure it’s exactly ten million.”

-Kikit!

Following Yeongwoo’s order, the Golden Goblin opened the pocket of its interdimensional pouch.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo and Zhang Jaham arrived at the front of Yantai City Hall.

“Is it in here?”

“Yes, a special room on the first floor of the office building. He should be waiting there.”

Even in this situation, Zhang Jaham couldn’t figure out who was more formidable, the National Tax Service employee or Yeongwoo.

In truth, Yeongwoo himself wasn’t sure either.

‘I haven’t defaulted on my taxes, so what do I have to fear?’

In a place like this universe, where a chairman who killed a high-ranking official could roam freely, Yeongwoo saw no need to bow to an official.

He thought it would be enough to show a basic level of courtesy that didn’t interfere with official duties.

“Here we are.”

Finally, Zhang Jaham stopped before a large door with gold trim.

“Yes, let’s meet them.”

Yeongwoo checked that the half-mask on his waist was secure, then pushed open the door to the private room.

Whaaack!

The first thing that came into view was a wall adorned with a red five-star flag, and in front of it, three large leather sofas arranged in a U-shape around a large table.

And the National Tax Service employee in question was...

-Uhm.

Sitting on the sofa directly facing the entrance, examining a teacup with unnervingly long fingers.

‘...An alien.’

As expected, the so-called National Tax Service employee who had come to meet Jeong Yeongwoo⁰⁷ was not human.

Though about the same height as Yeongwoo at around 2 meters, each arm was at least 1.5 meters long.

Because his arms were so long, he had to bend his elbows excessively to hold the teacup, making his awkward posture even more bizarre, emphasizing his alien nature.

-You’ve arrived. I haven’t been waiting long.

The alien spoke quite humanly.

Not only the tone but also the face somewhat resembled a human’s.

The long, pale face had eyes, nose, and mouth in familiar positions.

However, there was no bridge of the nose, just two nostrils in flat skin, and the eyes lacked whites, filled with black pupils.

His legs, wrapped in black cloth, looked too thin to have muscles, and the same went for his arms, but his torso was an oddly thick inverted triangle.

Of course, this was obscured by what looked like a black suit, so what lay beneath was unknown.

Although he looked more like a Grim Reaper than a tax officer, the difference between the two in this universe wasn’t significant.

“I heard you were looking for me?”

Yeongwoo said as he crossed the threshold of the private room.

Meanwhile, Zhang Jaham couldn't bring himself to step inside and stood at the door, curious about the interaction but only peeking in.

Finally,

Thump.

Yeongwoo sat on the sofa.

As he did, the "Cosmic Etiquette" draped over his shoulder clanked loudly, asserting its presence.

Squeak!

「Cosmic Etiquette」 - ◇ Dogo Dimensional Weapon

【20% increased damage against government officials】

【20% resistance to special abilities】

【Dogo】

Cosmic Etiquette.

A new product from the universal weapon brand Dogo, and a sort of status symbol.

'Oh, right. This is our new product.'

Yeongwoo realized he had "Cosmic Etiquette" on his shoulder.

Unintentionally, he was now meeting a tax officer with equipment designed for assaulting officials.

'...Well, this turned into an advertisement.'

As Yeongwoo subtly glanced up at the ceiling, or somewhat beyond, the official placed the teacup down on the table.

Clink.

Then, inserting two long fingers into his pocket, he pulled out a black metal card, the size of a business card.

"To clarify, I haven't come here today due to any unfortunate circumstances."

The alien official preemptively reassured him.

It seemed he knew well about “Cosmic Etiquette’s” notorious reputation.

After all, the cloak itself was a dimensional weapon, deeply engraved with the Dogo company’s signature.

Therefore, it was evident to anyone that the Earthling in front of them was associated with Dogo.

“Aha... So, what brings you here? I’ve been paying my taxes diligently.”

Given how hard he worked to secure the acquisition tax for the Bastard sword just a few hours ago, Yeongwoo was tempted to draw it immediately.

Wasn’t it time to feel the satisfaction of paying a hefty tax?

But.

- Ah, well....

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Seeing the intimidating official shrink before “Cosmic Etiquette,” Yeongwoo’s rough resolve softened.

After all, it was not usually the field workers’ fault.

Thud.

The official finally placed his black business card in front of Yeongwoo.

- I am Jiazol, an 86th-level official in charge of registry work at the Temporary Bureau of the National Tax Service.

“...Excuse me? What did you say?”

Yeongwoo was surprised, not because of anything else, but because the tragic official in front of him was 86th-level.

How could there be an 86th level in the universe’s bureaucratic system?

- For details, please refer to this.

As Jiazol pointed to his business card, Yeongwoo looked at it.

Though nothing was written on the card, as soon as he saw it, a series of meanings unfolded in Yeongwoo's mind.

Flash!

[Jiazol1182] - 86th Level

| Temporary Bureau 0601142

| National Tax Service Registry Officer

"We always appreciate your valuable taxes."

*Verbal and physical abuse of officials is immediately prosecutable. Please refrain from such actions.

"...Oh, this is."

When Yeongwoo saw the card, he realized the official was genuine.

The black metal contained transcendent letters certifying an official public institution.

Moreover, the "National" in Jiazol's National Tax Service wasn't the "nation," but "bureau," used to denote specific departments within large organizations.

'So, the taxes don't go directly to a central agency; there's another intermediary institution?'

The entity collecting Earth's taxes wasn't the central government but a subordinate agency.

'Goodness.'

Yeongwoo was awed by the scale of the bureaucratic structure he couldn't even fathom.

At the same time, he had one question.

According to Jiazol's card, the Temporary Bureau 0601142 overseeing him managed a temporary administrative district.

In other words, Earth's jurisdiction was not yet determined.

'So when will the jurisdiction be decided? Can we choose where we belong?'

Since the card didn't provide an answer, Yeongwoo had to ask Jiazol.

“What’s all this? Why are you collecting taxes from a planet without an assigned jurisdiction? You haven’t done anything for us.”

At this, Jiazol’s already large eyes widened further, and he spread his long, spider-like fingers in a calming gesture.

- Refrain from verbal and physical abuse of officials...!

“Dammit, I’m not going to hit you!”

It seemed that Jiazol had misunderstood because the Earthling in front of him was wearing the latest Dogo dimensional weapon.

“Look! It’s already a headache with just the reset, why do you keep collecting taxes and stuff? We’re still in the middle of a civil war!”

Woosh!

Yeongwoo unconsciously stood up, towering over Jiazol.

Zhang Jaham, who was watching the conversation from outside the door, frantically waved his hands.

“S-sir! Calm down!”

He didn’t want Shandong Province to become the site of the first alien official murder.

Likewise, Jiazol, an 86th-level official, didn’t want to die in this remote place, so he shouted with all his might.

- The reason I came here is...!

“...!”

Yeongwoo, startled by the near-scream, backed off a bit, and Zhang Jaham, his heart pounding, waited for the alien official’s next words.

Then,

Swoosh.

Jiazol straightened his clothes and spoke in a more serious tone.

- I deliver this message on behalf of the Director of the Temporary Bureau 060II42 of the National Tax Service.

- You, '49523' Jeong Yeongwoo07, are now obligated to be a diligent taxpayer.

"...What?"

What was a "diligent taxpayer obligation," if not just a diligent taxpayer?

Fortunately, this mystery was soon resolved.

- This means you have become a major inspection target for the National Tax Service due to a recent excessive increase in income, and your cumulative tax payments within your planet have significantly increased.

'Of course, the acquisition tax for the Bastard sword and the catalog...'

As Yeongwoo nodded to himself, Jiazol continued gauging his reaction.

- Our recent inspection of your sources of income revealed numerous non-standard, non-universal earnings.

This likely referred to the tributes he received in China.

That's why Jiazol waited in Shandong Province instead of coming to Seoul.

"...So?"

Yeongwoo began to realize.

The Director of the National Tax Service had sent Jiazol as a proxy to protect his own neck.

Although verbal and physical abuse of officials is immediately prosecutable, it's not impossible if one has the capability.

Just as the Chairman had done.

'That cowardly bastard.'

While Yeongwoo cursed the Director he had never met, the unfortunate Jiazol continued the rest of his superior's message.

- Therefore, the head office intends to classify your non-standard income as business income and impose additional taxes according to regulations.

In other words, he was making a lot of money on Earth, so he had to pay more taxes.

‘How strong is the Director? Even if he’s a frontier institution head, he probably isn’t a top-level entity.’

Yeongwoo stared at the ceiling of the private room, which had a different meaning this time.

Meanwhile, Jiazol delivered the final piece of the message.

- Your planet is currently in an unclassified, neutral state. Cumulative tax payments will determine future planetary shares.

“What?”

The content made his eyes and ears perk up.

Even Zhang Jaham, standing outside the door, was shocked and doubted his ears.

“Mr. Jeong? Did you hear that?”

“I heard it! Wait a minute. Mr. Jiazol, what exactly do you mean? Planetary shares will be allocated based on tax payments?”

When Yeongwoo asked for confirmation, Jiazol clasped his hands together politely.

- That is correct. However, only those obligated to be diligent taxpayers are eligible for shares under internal regulations.

“Aha.”

Yeongwoo’s mind raced.

This was why the Director had bothered to send a proxy to stress the importance of proper tax payment.

They needed to accurately identify who would become the shareholders of this planet in the future, ensuring no tax evasion and diligent reporting.

“So, how many diligent taxpayer obligors are there? I mean, the candidates for shareholders.”

When Yeongwoo asked, Jiazol closed his eyes.

- According to internal regulations, I cannot disclose that information.

This meant he couldn’t even know how many people would share Earth’s ownership.

So, Yeongwoo changed his question slightly.

“Then, if only one diligent taxpayer obligor remains when the shares are distributed? Does that person get all the shares?”

Realizing Yeongwoo’s intent, Jiazol’s mouth gaped open.

- Theoretically, yes.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 265: Honest Tax Payment (2)

“Hyuh....”

Zhang Jaham’s voice faltered as he tried to call out to Jung Dae-hyeop. He couldn’t bring himself to say the word ‘hyeop.’

He couldn’t believe what he was hearing—killing everyone else to become the sole stakeholder of the Earth.

Was this something a sane person would say?

“You’re not serious, are you?”

Zhang Jaham asked, turning to Yeongwoo, who had been staring at Jiazol.

“What do you mean?”

“...I mean the monopolizing the stakes of the Earth. What you just said....”

“Oh.”

Yeongwoo responded as if it was nothing, causing Zhang Jaham’s eyes to widen even more.

“Well, the stakes of the Earth are indeed incomparable in value, but...”

“Don’t worry too much.”

“...Pardon?”

“If someone is designated as a faithful taxpayer, they’re probably not as good as you think.”

It was essentially a self-introduction.

“Just think of it as monsters fighting each other. The last one standing gets to own the Earth.”

“But surely among them, there must be!”

“If there are good people among them, it’ll show. If I meet someone truly good, I’ll reconsider.”

“.....!”

Although he didn’t believe it would happen, if the situation Zhang Jaham was worried about did arise, Yeongwoo meant he would consider it then.

Zhang Jaham had no more words to say.

‘A... a devil. Truly walking the path of a heretic.’

Zhang Jaham of Shandong Twin Evils didn’t consider himself good, but standing before this true evil sent chills down his spine.

This guy was even a cosmic evil.

He was already coveting China and wanted to swallow up the entire planet.

“So, there’s a high chance that Im Dupyeong is also a faithful taxpayer. That’s one more reason to kill him.”

While Yeongwoo muttered this, Jiazol slowly rose.

-If it’s alright, I’ll take my leave now.

Yeongwoo shoved Jiazol’s business card into his pocket and blocked his path.

Swoosh!

-.....!

Jiazol’s large pupils shook pitifully.

Yeongwoo, on the other hand, calmly said,

“Since you’re leaving, let me ask you one more thing.”

-...Please, go ahead.

“Is the faithful tax payment required only until the planetary stake is acquired?”

Jiazol’s face showed he didn’t immediately understand Yeongwoo’s question.

-Pardon?

Then, he regained his composure and recited his official line in a bureaucratic tone.

-Paying taxes is a duty as a member of this universe...

“Yes, that’s correct. But after acquiring the stake, there’s no relation between the tax amount and the acquisition, right?”

Yeongwoo asked if the secured stake would remain unaffected even if the tax amount decreased afterward.

And to this, Jiazol reluctantly admitted,

-...That is correct.

He had no choice but to tell the truth since, theoretically, there was no issue with that.

“I see. Thank you for your hard work.”

Only after hearing Jiazol’s answer did Yeongwoo step aside.

He had gotten the answer he wanted.

‘From the moment I acquire the stake, I can start looking for... no, devising tax-saving strategies.’

The price of tax evasion is death.

Therefore, it cannot be avoided. But he could minimize the tax amount.

Just like he was already benefiting from special deductions for single-parent families and dependents.

However, those unaware of cosmic paperwork were likely paying enormous taxes even now.

‘Sorry, but the faithful taxpayers need to die.’

As Yeongwoo, harboring vague murderous intent, was about to leave the private room, Jiazol raised his hand towards the sky.

-The one who faithfully pays taxes is the master of this planet.

It seemed to be the slogan of the temporary jurisdiction 0601142 National Tax Service.

Then, a beam of light descended from the sky, sucking Jiazol up.

Swoosh!

‘Traveling on beams of light. He truly is a cosmic bureaucrat.’

Yeongwoo looked up at the ceiling where Jiazol had disappeared, his eyes filled with envy.

Then, Zhang Jaham cautiously approached.

“Dae-hyeop... what are you going to do now?”

“What do you think? First, save China from the dictator who became an alien puppet....”

Then, collect tribute from as many Chinese cities as possible.

“And use that money as a base to enter North America.”

“...Ah, so you have a plan, Dae-hyeop.”

A crazy plan, that was.

Zhang Jaham broke out in a cold sweat.

But paradoxically, he also felt that they were on the correct ship for this insane world.

“But... why North America? Is it because of the planetary stake?”

The planetary stake.

It was still a concept he didn’t fully grasp, but Zhang Jaham knew he had to master the art of conversation with Jeong Yeongwoo to survive.

“Yes. The stake issue is part of it, but there’s also an achievement I need to accomplish there.”

This referred to the legendary achievement “Golden Typhoon.”

[Golden Typhoon]

[Summon the golden rain by any of the following four methods. (2/4)]

- In the North American continent.
- When two entities with #chaebol and #dragon attributes are fighting.
- When a level 2 or higher extra-dimensional being visits.

There were two conditions left to fulfill for the achievement. And thanks to Pangaea, summoning the golden rain on the North American continent became possible.

‘But first, I need to settle things in China. As long as Im Dupyeong is alive, I can’t predict when he might push into the Korean Peninsula.’

As Yeongwoo set these short- to mid-term goals, he noticed something flashing at the bottom of his achievement window.

“.....?”

Yeongwoo scrolled down to the very bottom of the achievement window.

Flash!

He saw the Pangaea achievement blinking in and out.

[Pangaea]

[Witness the movement of a continent during tectonic shifts.

“What, what is this?”

The achievement “Pangaea,” which he failed to complete even after witnessing the Korean Peninsula attaching to China, was suddenly reacting.

‘China isn’t moving right now, is it?’

As Yeongwoo looked around, Zhang Jaham stared at him frightenedly.

“Dae-hyeop, is there another problem? If there’s anything more, please tell me in advance.”

“No, it doesn’t seem to be a China issue.”

Yeongwoo's eyes blinked rapidly.

His mind, already quickly adapting to this bizarre world, was racing again.

'What could it be? This achievement requires witnessing a continent moving. But is there another landmass around here that could be considered a continent...?'

Then Yeongwoo's mouth dropped open.

There was only one conclusion.

'Could it be, Australia? Is Australia coming?'

Australia.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

The youngest of Earth's four major continents, known as Meganesia or the Australian continent.

And Meganesia, while unlikely, was a continent that could potentially attach to the Korean Peninsula.

Of course, this would require pushing aside Indonesia and the Philippines and a long journey north.

'Unbelievable. Is that vast landmass sailing all day?'

What kind of world was this?

But Yeongwoo knew well.

There was no such thing as "unbelievable" in this world.

So, what was the next step?

"If the Australian continent is approaching, where should I go?"

"Pardon?"

"....."

Seeing Zhang Jaham's puzzled face, Yeongwoo immediately left the private room.

He decided there was no need to stay here any longer.

“You know the money, right? Send it to Incheon tomorrow!”

“A-ah, Dae-hyeop!”

“Take care of your throat, and see you next time!”

Tat-tat!

Yeongwoo jumped on the Negwig waiting outside City Hall.

Just then, Wu Qingjin, who was returning with the golden goblin, greeted him.

“Dae-hyeop! Leaving already?”

“Yes, something urgent came up. If the executive committee retaliates, don’t intervene. Send someone to Seoul.”

With those words, Yeongwoo sped off southwards with the goblin riding behind him.

* * *

If the Australian continent were to move north, where would it attach?

Simply put, it seemed likely it would attach to the vast southern part of China, but Yeongwoo’s guess was different.

‘Above Australia are Indonesia, the Philippines, and Taiwan. To the right is Papua New Guinea.’

So, if these countries don’t all break apart at sea, they’d definitely attach to a nearby continent.

Just like Yeongjongdo between Incheon and Shandong Province.

The scale was different, but Yeongwoo had seen a similar case directly.

So he could create a tectonic shift sample with some justification.

‘If the Australian continent doesn’t split in half and moves up while maintaining its shape....’

In that case, naturally, half of Indonesia would attach to Vietnam, and the rest would push up with the Philippines and attach to southern China.

...In the process, Papua New Guinea might get pushed up and wrap around the southern coast of China or even detach entirely and connect to the southeastern part of Japan.

Anyway, the most important thing in this situation was where to go to see the Australian continent approaching, and Yeongwoo's answer to this was:

'...Jeju Island?'

As expected, Jeju Island should be connected to Wando due to the Pangaea event.

In other words, if he reached Wando by passing through Mokpo and Haenam, he would naturally be able to see Jeju Island, now accessible by land.

'I don't even know what I'm talking about.'

Nevertheless, that was the situation.

To see the Australian continent sailing at high speed, he had to go to Jeju Island.

'If I keep running straight to Wando... I might arrive around 9 o'clock.'

Due to the Pangaea event connecting parts of the Korean Peninsula and China, the straight-line distance was shortened, making it possible.

However, he wouldn't be able to return to Seoul in time, so he would have to sleep near Wando or Jeju Island.

'Of course, I could theoretically sleep in Australia too.'

Thinking this, Yeongwoo was already heading southeast.

* * *

8:14 PM.

Yeongwoo, who had left Yantai, Shandong Province, and crossed the Chinese land, encountered strange terrain before 9 PM.

He reached a place where ambiguous land stretched out, neither fully plains nor mountains.

Moreover, dry land suddenly alternated with mudflats.

"What is this place?"

Was this a side effect of the Pangaea event?

Tilting his head in confusion, Yeongwoo soon understood by looking at the region status window that appeared.

Flash!

| You are currently in the 'Shinan' region.

| The Strongest Sword of this region is 'Park Cheongwon01'. 1st, Defense 188.

This was the infamous Shinan.

An archipelago made up of over a thousand islands.

The reason Yeongwoo felt a sense of discord in the geography of the area was because of this.

'188 defenses? That's no ordinary feat.'

Although curious about what Shinan was like post-reset, Yeongwoo had a more urgent matter at hand.

He needed to complete the Pangaea achievement.

This achievement required him to witness Australia moving towards the Korean Peninsula.

Arriving after the two lands had already connected would be meaningless.

"Move!"

Seeing a group of swordsmen who seemed to be Shinan residents, Yeongwoo made a threatening sound.

Meanwhile,

"Who is that guy?"

"A talking horse...?"

"Huh? That face looks familiar...?"

The swordsmen looked bewildered, recalling the fleeting black figure that had just passed by.

“Everyone, get out of my way!”

Yeongwoo kept shouting at those blocking his path as he passed through Shinan County.

Eventually,

Flash!

| You are currently in the ‘Haenam’ region.

| The Strongest Sword of this region is ‘Kim Hyungbeom06’. 2nd generation, defended 41 times.

Yeongwoo had reached Haenam, where Kim Hyungbeom reigned supreme.

‘Who would have thought I’d come to the southernmost village?’

As Yeongwoo wore an incredulous expression, the ground began to shake slightly beneath him, or rather, it really started shaking.

Rumble...

‘I’m an expert at this. I’m not too late.’

As he had expected, the Australian continent was indeed rushing toward the Korean Peninsula.

And just as if waiting for this moment,

Ping!

With a clear signal sound, a new urgent quest appeared.

[Urgent] “Finally, Global Village”

[Mission] Select Dogo as a cooperative partner for the Pangaea rewards.

[Reward] 5 million Karma

“What?”

Yeongwoo re-read the quest.

Although it was called a quest, strictly speaking, this was...

‘Isn’t this a sole-source contract request?’

[Mission] Select Dogo as a cooperative partner for the Pangaea rewards.

What kind of Pangaea rewards were they that he needed to select a ‘cooperative partner’?

Whatever it was, it seemed clear that some kind of business rights were at stake.

So, Yeongwoo,

“Whew.”

After taking a deep breath, looked up at the sky and spoke clearly.

“Do you still see me as the Yeongwoo who was happy with small change? I will become the owner of the Earth. Bring more money.”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 266: Highway (1)

“Bring more money...!”

There was no immediate reaction from the Dogo side to Yeongwoo’s audacious demand.

[Dogo] “Finally, Global Village”

[Mission] Select Dogo as a cooperative partner in the Pangaea rewards.

[Reward] 5 million Karma

The quest Dogo gave was still visible in Yeongwoo’s view, and Negwig was continuously rushing south.

‘...Was I too arrogant? But trying to secure a sole-source contract for just 5 million is too much, right?’

Yeongwoo had grown wise enough to understand now.

If the Strongest Sword on a single planet could earn tens of millions daily, then Dogo, operating on a universal scale, would make hundreds or even thousands of times more.

So, handing over a potential new income source for Dogo for a mere 5 million was absurd.

At least, that's what Yeongwoo thought.

"Chairman, if this partnership selection has nothing to do with company profits, I apologize sincerely. But...!"

Yeongwoo raised his head toward the sky.

Flash!

"If this is profitable, you should be doing business with me too!"

Thud, thud!

Negwig's iron hoofbeats resonated powerfully after Yeongwoo's declaration.

And then suddenly,

Bang!

With a loud boom, the Dogo quest was updated.

[Dogo] "Finally, Global Village"

[Mission] Select Dogo as a cooperative partner in the Pangaea rewards.

[Reward] 50 million Karma

The quest reward had increased tenfold from 5 million.

'These guys, seriously.'

It was clear that the completion of the Pangaea achievement was indeed related to the rights of the cooperative partner.

'Were they trying to swindle me, or rather my planet?'

Feeling indignant, Yeongwoo raised his child to the sky and shouted,

"Dogo!"

His words and actions matched perfectly.

Yeongwoo was also doing business with all his might at this moment.

‘Now, if I just see the Australian continent move, I’ll easily earn 50 million!’

As Yeongwoo thought this and turned Negwig’s head further south, the tremors in the ground grew even stronger.

The Australian continent... Meganesia was getting quite close.

“Just a little more! We’re almost there!”

Yeongwoo encouraged Negwig, stroking its steel mane, and the creature emitted a black light from its eyes and let out a strange cry.

-Squeal!

Then, it accelerated so fast that the surrounding scenery seemed to blur.

Bang!

“Whoa!”

As Yeongwoo leaned forward due to Negwig’s sudden acceleration, he saw a crowd of people through the black mane.

He intuitively knew,

‘It’s the coast.’

And indeed,

“What, what is this?”

“There are so many people...”

“Is there a war or something?”

The residents of Haenam, each holding a weapon, were murmuring as they looked at something across the sea.

Seeing Yeongwoo and Negwig approaching from behind, they belatedly pointed their weapons at them.

“Scream!”

“It’s a monster!”

“A mutant...?”

Anyone could see that Yeongwoo’s appearance was that of a mutant, so most of the crowd screamed and scattered in all directions.

However, there was one person who remained calm and recognized Yeongwoo.

“Isn’t that the Strongest Sword?”

That person was Kim Hyungbeom, the Strongest Sword of Haenam.

Knowing that there was no being in this area that could harm him, he was not startled by the stranger’s sudden appearance.

Of course, he wasn’t startled, but he was tense, seeing the publicly selected strongest person in Korea up close.

He instinctively moved his right hand to the sword at his waist.

“.....”

As Yeongwoo stared at his right hand, Hyungbeom quickly withdrew it, surprised.

“It’s late, what brings you here?”

As expected, the strongest people from various regions didn’t welcome the visit of someone stronger than themselves.

So, to reassure him, Yeongwoo pointed towards the sea.

“I don’t have any business in Haenam. I just came to see the land connect.”

“Ah.”

Kim Hyungbeom made a reluctant face.

Then he scratched his neck and said,

“You’ve already been to China, so seeing Jeju Island approach wouldn’t be that impressive.”

“.....!”

Yeongwoo’s face momentarily flushed before returning to its original color.

Hyungbeom's recent remark implied that he, too, had watched the pros and cons vote conducted on Jeong Yeongwoo.

However, there was another problem with that remark.

"Jeju Island?"

"Yes. Weren't you here to see Jeju Island?"

Kim Hyungbeom, the Strongest Sword of Haenam, raised his hand and pointed toward the coastline.

From there, a massive landmass was approaching at considerable speed.

The shore was crowded with people, making it easy to mistake the scene for an invasion on an island if seen from a distance.

With his telescopic vision, Yeongwoo quickly realized that the people of Jeju were fleeing to the coast of the Korean Peninsula to escape something.

Undoubtedly, the Australian continent, closely pursuing Jeju Island, had scared them.

"Oh, you thought I came to see Jeju Island."

As Yeongwoo muttered this while checking his equipment, Hyungbeom raised his eyebrows and asked,

"You didn't? Then why are you here...?"

Then, voices of distress started to come from the direction of Jeju Island.

"Save us!"

"Help us...!"

The sounds were now close enough to be heard clearly.

"Save them...?"

Hyungbeom, not knowing what was happening, could only tilt his head in confusion.

In contrast, Yeongwoo, sensing the timing was right, spoke up.

"Bring any other Strongest Swords nearby."

"What? I'm the only Strongest Sword around here."

“Then we’ll have to go greet them ourselves.”

“Where are we going?”

“Australia.”

While the two Strongest Swords were having this bewildering conversation, the distance between Jeju Island and Haenam rapidly decreased.

“Hold my hand. We’re going over there now.”

“W-what do you mean by that...?”

Yeongwoo didn’t bother explaining further.

He could handle a local Strongest Sword like a mouse.

Bang!

Yeongwoo grabbed Hyungbeom’s shoulder and commanded Negwig to leap towards Jeju Island.

Negwig’s black eyes gleamed as they jumped over the sea.

-Squeal!

“Arghhh!”

Hyungbeom’s scream echoed over the South Sea as they crossed.

Seeing the iron beast flying towards them, the people on Jeju Island’s shore also panicked and fled.

“Strongest Sword! Why are you doing this to me?”

Despite the situation, Hyungbeom was relatively brave.

He managed to stay composed even while Yeongwoo held his shoulder and crossed the sea.

“Once Jeju and Australia connect, Australia’s problems will become Haenam’s problems, too.”

“W-what do you mean by connect?”

“We also need to find the Strongest Sword of Jeju. That person is in real trouble.”

However, witnessing the movement of the Australian continent was Yeongwoo's top priority.

Bang!

Landing on the beach of Jeju Island, Yeongwoo immediately placed Hyungbeom in Negwig's back seat.

"Argh!"

Thrown onto Negwig like luggage, Hyungbeom soon noticed,

"Someone's already riding this."

Yeongwoo's two slaves, the golden goblin and Pofu Tenta were glaring at Hyungbeom, clearly displeased.

"There's no choice. Bear with it."

Unless he forced himself onto the back seat, Hyungbeom would have to run alongside, and Yeongwoo had never seen a human who could run as fast as Negwig.

They needed to travel to the far end of Jeju Island.

-Squeal!

Finally, Negwig released its distinctive cry and started running again, prompting another scream from Hyungbeom.

"Arghhhh...!"

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

* * *

Strongest Sword.

No matter how much one might dominate a region, they were essentially just humans, as Yeongwoo realized once more.

"Please, slow down a bit!"

Through the constant shrill screams of the Strongest Sword of Haenam.

From Hyungbeom's perspective, there was no need to display the dignity of a strong person in front of the elected Strongest Sword of the Korean Peninsula, nor could he.

Thus, his true nature was unintentionally revealed under the title of the Strongest Sword of Haenam.

So, it was under the title of the Strongest Sword in Haenam that the true nature was inadvertently revealed.

"We're almost there. Just a little more."

Yeongwoo touched his gradually aching ears and looked ahead.

"....."

Like the coastline they had seen earlier, people lined up along the coastline ahead.

However,

'These are real combat forces.'

Unlike before, these were not people fleeing the Australian continent but those who had come to guard the borders in preparation for possible combat situations.

"Ah, ah....."

Seeing the people looking out to sea with their backs to the interior of Jeju Island, Yeongwoo spread his arms in emotional gratitude.

"Ah! You are the true national protectors!"

".....!"

Startled, the protectors of Jeju Island quickly turned around, and at the same time, Yeongwoo's eyes widened.

Boom!

The entire horizon was covered by the Australian continent, Meganesia.

"What, what the hell."

Even Kim Hyungbeom, the Strongest Sword in Haenam, opened his eyes wide upon seeing the massive continent chasing Jeju Island.

"How is that even possible?"

It was an event that defied Hyungbeom's common sense, but Yeongwoo dismissed his question with a single remark.

"What good is it to ask how it's possible when it's already happened? We need to think about how to respond."

"But, but.....!"

Was this the judgment of an elected official of the Korean Peninsula?

To Hyungbeom, Jeong Yeongwoo seemed to not even cringe at the sight before them.

'He's not shaken at all by seeing that? How is that possible?'

While Hyungbeom wiped the cold sweat from his temples, a nimble presence approached from the far end of the coastline.

"Oh dear.....!"

It was none other than the Strongest Sword of Jeju, Choi Moonsoon⁰².

A sturdy woman in her late forties, with a presence so solid that her short stature was hardly noticeable.

Carrying a massive greatsword on her shoulder despite her gentle appearance, she approached, making Yeongwoo flinch momentarily.

"You're here to help, right? But how did you know about this?"

As the continent split the water approaching, Moonsoon didn't seem surprised to see Yeongwoo and his party.

"Ah, Haenam.....!"

Then she approached the still-pale Strongest Sword in Haenam, grabbed his hand, and forced a handshake.

"Come on, everyone. We're not completely uncouth, you know. You see that over there?"

Moonsoon pointed with a blunt finger to the closer Meganesia.

Implying that they couldn't properly host guests due to the approaching Australian continent.

Yeongwoo nodded to indicate it was fine.

“They haven’t attacked or anything, have they?”

“How could they attack from so far away? They must be in a frenzy over there, too.”

Indeed, Moonsoon’s words were generally true.

Unless Australia had something like laser cannons.

“But we still need to be cautious. From their perspective, they’ve been geographically isolated and are now connected to Eurasia.”

Meaning they might be tense and could act aggressively.

Moonsoon then scanned Yeongwoo’s appearance and murmured.

“Then it’s war, huh.”

Despite her friendly demeanor, she was still the Strongest Sword of Jeju Island.

She subtly assessed Yeongwoo’s capabilities compared to hers.

However, Yeongwoo was preoccupied.

Flash!

[Achievement Unlocked: Pangaea]

| Achievement Rank: Epic

| Achievement Rank: #3

He was distracted by the newly achieved Pangaea achievement.

‘What, the rank is 3?’

This meant that two others had already completed the Pangaea achievement.

And soon, a universal weapon brand began the selection process for collaborative partners, offering a whopping 50 million Karma.

「Basic terrain modification of Planet II42-Earth has been implemented.」

「You can now select collaborative partners for planetary development.」

‘Planetary, development.....?’

While Yeongwoo's eyebrows twitched at the ominous words, the system continued its guidance.

「This planet has a total of 3 collaborative partner slots, and 2 slots have already been filled.」

Meaning Yeongwoo had just managed to catch the last slot after completing the Pangaea achievement.

And the same applied to Dogo.

「Conflicts between collaborative partners are frequent during planetary development, so please check the list of selected partners and reference charts.」

‘Reference chart?’

Curious about what to reference, Yeongwoo looked at the bottom of the interface and immediately understood the content.

[Selected Partner List]

1- Lemu

2- Mara

‘Damn, those guys.’

Two names Yeongwoo knew well were on the list of collaborative partners.

Familiar names were also listed below the chart.

[Dangerous Partner List]

*These are companies deemed unsuitable for planetary development.

1- Dogo

2- Hammer of Kwaya

3- Toma

4- Hexagon

5- Cerium

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 267: Highway (2)

‘Ha.’

Yeongwoo laughed, almost as if he had lost his mind.

Of course, he had expected that if a “List of Dangerous Companies” existed, Dogo would be on it.

But...

‘No, with only three slots available, it’s too much that two are already filled with a porn company and the King of Demons.’

And now, Dogo would soon be added to this list, completing the trifecta.

“.....”

Yeongwoo, feeling his vision darken, closed his eyes tightly without realizing it.

As someone who intended to be the sole diligent taxpayer and monopolize the shares of this planet, this was quite a troublesome situation.

Among the companies set to develop Earth, there wasn’t a single decent one.

‘An indefinite development, right? Since there’s no specified term, that’s what it seems like, right?’

Of course, he could betray his loyalty to the chairman and find the most decent company to fill the last slot.

But...

‘With the state of the companies that are already in, can a righteous company survive?’

Lemu might be unexpectedly decent, but from the term itself, Mara was the very essence of a demon.

—Master of the Void, one who walks in the shadow of universal laws, King of Ten Thousand Demons.

In Yeongwoo's limited experience, the only entity capable of contending with Mara among the alien companies was...

'...the chairman and his underlings.'

Didn't he witness it himself last night at the dungeon gambling house in Batum?

Dogo's employees, not even their regular army but "Guppy Special Grade" staff, beat up and drove away Mara's minions.

Thus, if Dogo seriously entered the planetary rights battle, they might be able to pressure Mara.

'It's the lesser evil. I'd rather bet on the chairman than leave Earth to Lemu and Mara.'

The chairman and Dogo's shareholders despise Lemu as lowly.

Therefore, putting Dogo in the developer slot would naturally drive Lemu out.

The only remaining problem was Mara, the king of all demons.

'If they couldn't handle Mara, they wouldn't have dared to act like that at the gambling house.'

Trusting in the myth-like chairman, Yeongwoo made his decision.

'The company I select is Dogo.'

He decided to pour fuel onto an already burning planet.

「The company you have selected, 'Dogo,' is the most dangerous company. Do you wish to confirm the selection?」

The selection system questioned Yeongwoo's choice as expected.

He nodded slightly and finalized Dogo as the last development company.

'Yes. The third development company for Earth is Dogo.'

This moment might be the turning point of Earth's destiny.

Fwoosh!

As soon as Yeongwoo confirmed the last company, a wave emanated from the sky, sweeping through it as if tidying up Earth's atmosphere.

‘What was that?’

Though he couldn’t see it, Yeongwoo sensed something significant had occurred and looked up at the sky.

‘Could it be that a protective shield has been lifted?’

It seemed like a preliminary step for the selected companies to officially enter the planet.

And then...

「The development companies for Planet II42-Earth have all been selected.」

A message appeared indicating that the basic procedure related to company selection was complete.

The final company list, completed by Yeongwoo’s last strike, was as follows:

[Selected Companies List]

1- Lemu

2- Mara

3- Dogo

‘Goodness. What have I done...?’

It was a dazzling lineup that left him speechless.

But it was already done, and he had no other alternatives anyway.

‘There’s no turning back. At this point, the only option is to destroy the other two companies with the chairman.’

Lemu, suspiciously flush with cash, and Mara, whose true nature was still not fully revealed.

How exactly would these entities develop Earth?

And Dogo’s planetary development—what kind of approach would that be?

‘The world is going increasingly mad.’

As Yeongwoo was deep in planetary concerns, someone boldly tapped him on the arm.

“Hey.”

“.....?”

When Yeongwoo turned his head, he saw Choi Moonsoon, the Strongest Sword of Jeju, looking at him sternly.

“What are you doing at this point? They’re already right in front of us.”

She gestured with her chin towards the sea, where the Australian continent, Meganesia, was approaching.

“Ah.”

Only then did Yeongwoo realize he had been the only one witnessing the company selection process.

It was a semi-confidential business only visible to the three people with the selection authority.

However, once the actual planetary development began, everyone on Earth would inevitably know whether they wanted to or not.

It would become clear that something monumental was happening to the planet.

Rumble, rumble, rumble...!

Of course, the immediate concern wasn’t planetary development but the rapid geographical change as the Australian continent approached at high speed.

“What do we do now? Should we draw our swords first?”

Moonsoon spoke with the momentum of someone ready to fight immediately, but Yeongwoo gestured for her to wait.

“We need to be prepared, but there’s no need to take an aggressive stance immediately. We don’t know how they’ll react yet.”

From Yeongwoo’s perspective, Australia wasn’t a continent with the best geographical conditions for human habitation.

It was about 35 times the size of the Korean Peninsula but had a population of around 26 million before the reset.

That meant half the population of South Korea lived on that vast land.

‘In reality, outside the cities, Australia feels like an apocalypse.’

The reason was its harsh soil.

A significant portion of Australia was desert, unsuitable for farming and even for habitation.

Consequently, most of its major cities were located in the southeast and some in the southwest of the continent.

The central and northern parts were almost uninhabited.

For example, Darwin, a major city in northern Australia, had a population of about 120,000, much smaller than a district in Seoul.

And crucially...

‘The part that will border us is the northern part of Australia.’

And even that was just a portion of the north.

The critical fact was the population.

“Even if we go to war with Australia right now, it won’t be very threatening. Unless they have some bizarre weapons.”

“Why?”

“Because almost no one lives in the part that borders us.”

“Still, aren’t there cities like Sydney...?”

“To get from Sydney to the northern part of the continent, they’d have to travel thousands of kilometers. Even if they started moving as soon as Pangaea was announced, they wouldn’t have arrived yet.”

Even for Yeongwoo, moving on Negwig wouldn’t be easy.

Thus, the chances of another such entity existing in Australia were almost zero.

“Uh... then this isn’t a big deal, is it?”

Moonsoon looked somewhat disappointed at the notion of no grand war, then glanced at the swordsmen of Jeju Island, who were staring intently at the coastline.

“But we still don’t know, right?”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

“Yes. We can’t be complacent. They must be highly vigilant on their side, too.”

However, unnecessary bloodshed should be avoided if possible.

In the broader sense, they, too, were Earth’s taxpayers.

Contributing to the Global World Product (GWP), they were a valuable workforce.

“We’ll soon be able to see with our own eyes.”

Yeongwoo activated his ‘Clairvoyance’ to expand his view as the horizon grew darker.

Flash!

What appeared as thick lines to the naked eye now became clear outlines of the northern Australian coast.

And then...

“Huh...?”

Yeongwoo let out a surprised exclamation.

“What? What do you see?”

Choi Moonsoon’s eyes widened as she urged Yeongwoo to answer, and Yeongwoo cautiously replied, still unsure.

“Something... is a bit strange.”

Because...

‘What is that...?’

An array of unfamiliar weapons lined up along the northern Australian coastline.

They appeared to be a type of spear.

Seeing so many of them indicated they were standard equipment, but Yeongwoo had never seen such weapons before, even in the ‘Mountain of Swords’ he encountered on the first day of the reset.

Moreover...

‘Could those be war machines?’

Amidst the neatly lined-up spears, there were banners fluttering high, giving off an ominous atmosphere.

The red, tattered banners had something white stamped on them, and no matter how he looked at it, it resembled...

‘Foot... prints?’

Yes.

Those banners bore footprints.

The problem was...

‘Footprints...? If those are stamped with ink, how can I see them from here?’

The footprints were enormous.

While someone might have drawn them by hand...

‘No... you can tell. That kind of roughness comes from direct stamping.’

Thus, the conclusion was clear.

Something in Australia had feet at least ten times the size of an average human’s.

‘Then... it’s not human, is it?’

The moment Yeongwoo realized this...

“...!”

A large silhouette appeared on the northern coast of Australia, which he was viewing at five times magnification.

“Oh, my...?”

“What, what is it? What’s happening? Hey, Strongest Sword!”

Even with Choi Moonsoon shaking his shoulder violently beside him, Yeongwoo couldn’t tear his eyes away.

Right now, he was staring at a giant orc, at least 5 or 6 meters tall.

“No way, what happened to Australia?”

As Yeongwoo’s eyes widened at the unbelievable sight, the orc in question pulled a spear from the ground.

“Ah.”

At that moment, Yeongwoo realized many things.

Hadn’t he already encountered them in Mungyeong, North Gyeongsang Province?

The orc army that had a clear understanding of the concept of ‘tactics.’

One of their favored strategies was none other than...

‘A rain of spears.’

It seemed that a preference for spears was common among orc species.

The massive orc Yeongwoo was looking at had red skin.

And then, finally...

“They’re coming...!”

“What? What is?”

Within Yeongwoo’s enhanced vision, the massive red orc hurled its hefty spear.

Straight towards them.

Swooosh!

A tremendous sound of breaking air echoed across the South Sea, and even Choi Moonsoon realized that an enormous spear was flying their way.

“Oh, damn!”

She quickly readied her sword in surprise.

Creak!

The sound of a bowstring being drawn came from right beside her.

“...Huh?”

In that short time, the ‘Strongest Sword’ had pulled out a large bow and was drawing the string.

“Looks like you’ll need to prepare for war.”

As Yeongwoo said this and released the bowstring, a special arrow from Dogo flew through the air.

Whoosh!

Then, it intercepted the orc’s spear aimed at Jeju Island’s coast.

Boom!

“What the... is that a THAAD?”

[PR/N: Terminal High Altitude Area Defense or THAAD is an anti-ballistic missile system of the US army that can shoot down short, intermediate and medium-range ballistic missiles in their terminal phase.]

The spear had been so fast it was difficult to track with the naked eye.

Yet, when the Strongest Sword shot it down with an arrow, Choi Moonsoon’s gaze changed.

She realized that this man, who seemed like a rookie, was the Korean people’s representative for a reason.

Meanwhile, Yeongwoo turned his gaze back across the sea to observe Australia’s reaction.

Swoosh.

As the distance between the two sides had closed even further, he could see what lay behind the giant orc that had thrown the spear.

It was...

“No way...”

An army of red-skinned orcs marching in black and red masses.

These orcs, each averaging about 3 meters in height, numbered in the thousands, and each unit seemed to be assigned one of the giant orcs like the one he had seen earlier.

In other words, they were truly here for war.

“Where did all of these come from?”

While Yeongwoo was still reacting in disbelief, he soon realized their background.

One orc, in particularly flamboyant attire, emerged from among the well-organized ranks of orcs.

On top of that orc’s head was...

『Red-foot Orc Lord』

≡Invaders of Northern Australia≡

It was a title Yeongwoo had never seen before.

However, the basic format was the same as the one for the Strongest Sword.

This meant that this orc’s identity was likely...

“Oh my...”

Before Yeongwoo could even say anything, the orc lord in question brought a horn to its mouth with its left hand.

Then, a resonant sound echoed across the sea.

—I am Bantubangtong, Strongest Swordtain of the 'Red Foot'! As of yesterday, Australia has been declared an orc-autonomous territory!

—Humans must guarantee the orcs’ right to survive! If not, there will only be war!

The monster had become Australia’s Strongest Sword.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

Chapter 268: Highway (3)

“What the—”

Choi Moonsoon, the Strongest Sword of Jeju, was left speechless, her mouth hanging open.

It was simply too absurd.

Not only had the orcs taken over Australia, but they were now demanding their right to survival.

“How, how did this happen? I mean, how did they even...”

While she wanted to personally smash the heads of those crazy creatures, she had seen the prowess of the orc army earlier.

Thus, Moonsoon had no choice but to plead with Jeong Yeongwoo, the top problem solver of the Korean Peninsula and the “Strongest Sword.”

“Do something about them, Strongest Sword!”

Yeongwoo, who had been thinking with a blink of his eyes, stepped forward.

“...Shall I?”

However, Yeongwoo's actions as the elected “Strongest Sword” by the people of the Korean Peninsula far surpassed Moonsoon’s expectations.

The first thing he did in front of the “Red Foot” orc legion was—

“Oh, Bantubangtong!”

—to call the orc leader’s name with a tone of admiration.

“What...?”

Moonsoon widened her eyes and stared at Yeongwoo, but the strongest man of the peninsula took another step toward the coast without concern.

“The principle of this planet, Earth, is survival of the fittest! The strong survive, and those who stand last are the owners of the land!”

“Strongest Sword... What are you talking about right now!”

This was a statement that had been discussed with no one, not even Moonsoon.

But Yeongwoo had no intention of consulting anyone at this gathering.

Wasn't Jeong Yeongwoo elected as the "Strongest Sword" to make bold decisions for the Korean Peninsula without complicated decision-making processes?

Moreover, through past disclosures, voters had enough information.

They knew very well that Jeong Yeongwoo was not someone who acted conventionally.

'But they probably expected that his unconventional actions would ultimately benefit the nation when they elected me.'

Therefore, the only duty Yeongwoo had to uphold as the Strongest Sword was one.

To ensure that all his actions eventually led to national interest.

As long as he did that, he believed he could maintain his position as the Strongest Sword, no matter what decisions he made.

Such were the tough times of survival.

A time desperately in need of strong leaders and representatives.

As proof of this, a staggering 76.8% of the peninsula's people had bet on Yeongwoo's "unconventionality."

Hence, Yeongwoo declared,

"Orc survival rights? As the representative of the Korean Peninsula and the future master of Earth, I, Jeong Yeongwoo07, will guarantee them!"

He decided to guarantee the orcs' right to survive.

And this was virtually tantamount to granting the orcs the right to rule Earth.

"Are you crazy? What are you going to do!"

As expected, Moonsoon grabbed Yeongwoo's shoulders and shook them furiously.

Even Kim Hyungbeom, the Strongest Sword of Haenam, who had been holding his breath until now, cautiously expressed his concern.

"Orc survival rights... I also voted for you in the approval poll, but this seems like a different issue."

"What's the problem?"

"Uh... They're not human?"

“If they’re not human, do we have to go to war?”

“Well, uh... of course not, but...”

“They’re originally monsters, so it’s different. But if their claims are true, it means they have been dealing with Australia’s mutants for at least two days. That shows they have significant power.”

“Oh.”

Hyungbeom made a subtle expression, as if he hadn’t thought that far.

“Imagine how much effort those monsters, not even mutants, must have put in to deal with the human named ones in the Australian region and conquer the continent. I think we need to hear their side of the story.”

“...?”

Feeling that something was slightly off, Hyungbeom opened his mouth again, but Yeongwoo continued.

“They have already proven their survival ability, and most importantly, they are the de facto rulers of Australia. If we fight the orcs, we might gain Australian land... but how will we manage that vast and barren continent?”

“So, are you going to just leave the ones who killed people and took over Australia alone?”

“Who are those people? Are they your family, Hyungbeom? They have no relation to us, and for the already dead people, resetting the Australian continent again is pointless.”

“No, but still...!”

Hyungbeom seemed unable to agree emotionally.

Of course, as a human being before anything else, Yeongwoo could understand his feelings.

“They are the ones who killed people and took away human territories. But on the other hand, they are also beings who came to an unfamiliar planet and became the prey of humans. Was Australia an unconditional victim?”

“... ”

From a human standpoint, it was pure sophistry, but the argument itself wasn’t entirely without merit.

Monsters were generally considered prey.

However, due to geographical characteristics, humans couldn't dominate Australia, and thus were pushed back by the tactically skilled orcs.

"This planet is changing much more and faster than you think. Compared to what will happen in the future, the fact that a single, smallest continent has fallen to a different race is not that surprising."

In fact, Yeongwoo thought this might actually be a good thing.

At this point, where humanity is moving beyond globalization to becoming interstellar, he thought it might not be bad if the composition of 'Earth citizens' became a little more diverse.

Of course, this was such a radical idea that he never voiced it aloud for fear it might be recorded somewhere.

"They said that if humans don't guarantee the orcs' right to survival, there will be nothing but war. That means, if we guarantee their right to survival, there will be options other than war. Right?"

At Yeongwoo's words, both the Strongest Swords of Haenam and Jeju nodded blankly.

Yeongwoo's thoughts were so unrealistic and extreme that their thought processes were overloaded.

"What... What other option is there? What do they want?"

Eventually, Choi Moonsoon, the Strongest Sword of Jeju, asked the crucial question, and Yeongwoo replied as if he had been waiting for it.

"Taxes. I want the orcs to become affiliated citizens of the Korean Peninsula before they become residents of Earth."

"...?"

"To do that, they need to fulfill their civic duty, starting with paying taxes."

"You want to collect taxes from the orcs?"

"We've collected taxes from humans so far, is there any reason we can't collect from orcs?"

"My goodness."

“What we guarantee in return for these harsh taxes is not just the orcs' lives.”

The term "harsh taxes" sent a chill down Moonsoon's spine, but she was more curious about Yeongwoo's next words, so she didn't point it out.

“...So, what do we guarantee the orcs?”

“We guarantee the future of their race.”

“...!”

“If the orcs pay their taxes properly, they will thrive in Australia.”

* * *

Kwaaang!

Finally, as Jeju Island and Meganesia touched, a tremendous shock wave swept through the area, reminiscent of an earthquake.

Fwoosh!

“Ugh!”

“Oh my goodness.”

Even the brave swordsmen of Jeju, who had held their ground until this moment, hesitated, and both the Strongest Swords of Haenam and Jeju looked ahead, brushing their hair aside.

Because—

“Graaah!”

“Guwooor!”

The furious orcs on the other side were shouting, claiming their right to survival.

Thanks to Yeongwoo's intervention, they didn't immediately cross the continental border.

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

“Are you coming with me?”

When Yeongwoo asked this, turning to the two Strongest Swords, Hyungbeom asked back hesitantly.

“W-where are you talking about?”

“Where else?”

Yeongwoo pointed towards the Australian continent, where thousands of heavily armed orcs were in battle formation.

“You don't have to come, but when else will you get a chance to sit at a negotiation table with orcs?”

As Yeongwoo said this, one side of the orc line really parted, and from within, large orcs emerged, carrying a large iron table and chairs like a coffin.

A literal “negotiation table” appeared.

Boom!

The iron table was placed on the barren land of Australia.

Then, the orc lord Bantubangtong spread his palm and pointed to the table.

“If you have courage, sit across from me.”

“Hmmm.”

Without a word, Yeongwoo left Jeju Island and set foot in Australia.

Thud.

Then, after a moment of hesitation, Choi Moonsoon slung her greatsword over her shoulder and followed Yeongwoo.

On the other hand, Kim Hyungbeom said,

“I... I'll stay here just in case.”

Unlike the other two Strongest Swords, he chose psychological stability.

No matter how strong Jeong Yeongwoo was, he couldn't muster the courage to enter the midst of thousands of orcs with him.

Even if this scene was recorded and used as footage in a future election, it didn't matter.

Hyungbeom had no intention of running for the “Strongest Sword” election anyway.

“Yes. It's good to have someone covering our backs.”

Yeongwoo encouraged Hyungbeom, then walked up to the iron table surrounded by orcs.

A large shadow with "Golden Trail" loomed over him.

“Wooooo...”

Seeing this, the orcs slowly pointed their swords at Yeongwoo with tense expressions.

“What is that?”

Bantubangtong asked on behalf of everyone, and Yeongwoo glanced back and replied,

“As you can see, it's a sword. It won't attack without my command, so don't worry.”

Then, looking at the chair in front of him, Yeongwoo spoke again.

“On Earth, it's polite for the superior to sit first. So I'll sit first.”

“What?”

While Bantubangtong frowned, Yeongwoo had already pulled out the chair and sat down.

He gestured for Choi Moonsoon to sit as well.

“Ah.”

As Choi Moonsoon looked at the orc lord and tried to pull out his chair, Bantubangtong quickly sat down first.

'Simple-minded, just as he looks.'

Yeongwoo was confident the negotiation would end successfully.

“As I mentioned earlier, I will guarantee your right to survival.”

Bantubangtong rested his arms on the table and interlaced his fingers.

“How?”

“Simply by not attacking you immediately, I have already kept my promise.”

“Ha!”

Bantubangtong laughed, opening his mouth wide enough to show his uvula.

“Look, human. You’re bigger than the Australians, and you shoot well with your bow.”

As he said this, the large orcs, each positioned by unit, all turned towards the table.

They were the exceptionally large orcs who had thrown spears across the sea earlier.

“But you can't threaten us alone. Without an army, it might be us who need to demand the right to survive.”

“ ... ”

Yeongwoo realized why the orcs were so tactically skilled.

They lacked the concept of overwhelmingly powerful asymmetric forces like powerful mages or nuclear missiles, so they had to develop tactics that maximized small forces to create significant effects.

After a moment's thought, Yeongwoo spoke slowly.

“You still don't understand Earth, Bantubangtong.”

“What?”

“The Australia you invaded is the weakest of Earth's four continents.”

“ ... ! ”

“If the Swordtain knew Earth well, you would have been more anxious seeing me come here alone.”

“What... Are you saying you can face the legion alone?”

Bantubangtong looked incredulous, his interlaced fingers now separated.

Then Yeongwoo suddenly stood up and drew his sword, Bastard.

“Not just the legion. I will fight against planets in the future!”

With that, he swung his sword, slicing through the negotiation table as if it were tofu.

“This... this madman!”

As the startled Bantubangtong stood up and drew his sword, thousands of orcs aimed their weapons at Yeongwoo and Moonsoon.

“Strongest Sword! You crazy bastard! Why did you ask me to follow if this was your plan? Is this a negotiation?”

The pale-faced Choi Moonsoon shouted, but Yeongwoo stood firmly, staring at the orc lord.

“From now on, I'll kill about a hundred and drink the blood of the rest.”

“You fool, before you swing your sword a hundred times, you'll...!”

While Bantubangtong retorted with his outdated thinking, Yeongwoo looked up and shouted.

“Earth, 006! 491! 8832! 017!”

Amazingly, the orcs also looked up.

It was one of their common tactics, a shower of spears.

Though they didn't understand the coordinates, they recognized it as a call for support.

“No, it can't be...”

As Bantubangtong looked at the sky with disbelief, a gigantic laser beam, Earth's proud asymmetric force, shot down from the sky.

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 269: Highway (4)

On the day when a massive light descended from the sky, all the orcs in Australia remembered.

—After roughly killing a hundred people, I'll drain the blood of the rest.

That line was spoken by a human from the Korean Peninsula.

Roughly a hundred...

Kwaaaaaa!

However, no matter how they looked at it, the laser beam piercing through the sky didn't seem like it would stop after killing just 100 people.

Even the orcs, who were ignorant of asymmetric warfare, could tell that the area covered by that light...

- We're all gonna die!

- It's coming...!

- Run away!

The red-footed orcs, who started at the bottom of Australia's food chain and climbed to the top by their own efforts, were probably the greatest "monsters" on Earth.

Yet, they lost their composure in front of the asymmetric power they faced for the first time.

- Aaaah!

- Eeeek!

- Save me...!

The red-footed orcs, standing at least 3 meters tall, with some reaching up to 6 meters, fled in all directions in panic, causing a huge cloud of dust and shaking the ground.

And amidst this chaos...

Kwaaaat!

The laser bombardment accurately targetted the spot designated by Yeongwoo...

Boooom!

As expected, it swept across the land with a tremendous roar.

"Eeeek!"

Even Choi Moonsoon, the Strongest Sword of Jeju, who was with Yeongwoo, screamed pathetically.

However, Moonsoon soon realized...

“...Huh? What?”

Though there was an enormous impact sound just now, it came from quite a distance away.

And indeed...

Wooooooo...

The immense bombardment occurred in an open area about a hundred meters from the negotiation table.

Some orcs nearly got caught in the bombardment range because they ran too quickly, but in the end...

“No casualties yet. This was just a warning.”

As Yeongwoo said, there were no casualties yet.

From Yeongwoo’s perspective, these orcs were valuable manpower who would pay heavy taxes while managing Australia in the future, so he didn’t want to reduce their numbers if possible.

“Now, shall we resume our negotiations?”

Yeongwoo sat down first again.

With a thud.

Then, Orc Swordtain Bantubangtong, who had barely held his ground, bit his lip tightly.

And then...

- This is hopeless.

With a disheartened expression, he sat down on the chair.

With a thud.

Yeongwoo tilted his head and asked,

“Why is it hopeless? You haven’t suffered any damage yet.”

But Bantubangtong was more emotional than he appeared.

- Can we even call this a negotiation? This is just a formality, like this table; it's not a real negotiation.

Bantubangtong pointed to the negotiation table that Yeongwoo had just broken.

- We're being threatened now.

And by this time, the thousands of orc troops, noticing that Bantubangtong had sat back down, began to return.

Rumble...

"...Huh."

Seeing the red-footed orcs returning, raising dust, Yeongwoo expressed his admiration.

As expected, their cohesion was impressive.

'Humans could never achieve this. They have too many thoughts.'

But orcs could.

And perhaps it was because of this trait that, despite being monsters, they could occupy the Australian continent.

If they had started life on the Korean Peninsula or in China, they would have already become beings of the afterlife.

'Their arrival in Australia was fate, in a way.'

With a more generous look, Yeongwoo gazed at Bantubangtong.

Watching the laser bombardment fall and not moving an inch was indeed impressive.

Truly befitting the leader of such a large group.

So Yeongwoo paid his respects sincerely.

"Lord."

-?

"Usually, I've smashed the heads of those who speak informally to me. I have some inferiority complexes because of my humble origins."

- Ah... is that so?

“But as a sign of my respect for you, I’ll let you speak comfortably. This is the level of respect I give to my father.”

-

Bantubangtong couldn’t hide his confused expression after hearing Yeongwoo’s words. Since no orc had ever spoken to him like that, he didn’t know how to respond.

So, did he mean to speak comfortably or not?

-So... what will happen to Australia...?

Bantubangtong timidly asked again, but Yeongwoo didn’t care about such things at all.

“Australia remains as it is, under the rule of you and the Red Foot Orcs.”

-What? Are you serious?

Bantubangtong’s eyes widened in surprise.

In response, Yeongwoo nodded.

“Yes. However,”

Yeongwoo’s gaze shifted to Bantubangtong’s grand title.

『Red Foot Orc Lord』

≡Conqueror of Northern Australia≡

“You mentioned that Australia is an autonomous region of the orcs, but to be precise, you’ve occupied the northern part of Australia, right?”

-That’s right.

“Then there must be people in southern Australia, right? This part hasn’t been confirmed yet?”

Yeongwoo was confident that it hadn’t been confirmed.

If the Red Foot Orcs had taken over the entire continent, the special title would say “Conqueror of Australia” instead of “Conqueror of Northern Australia.”

And most importantly,

'This land is too vast. There's no way orcs, who move by running, could have swept across all of Meganesia in just a few days.'

Yeongwoo's reasoning was spot on.

Soon after, Bantubangtong stated,

-We have only occupied the areas where our feet have reached. We do not know what is in the places we haven't reached yet.

"Then there must be more people left in Australia. In fact, there will be far more than you expect. The two largest cities are located in the southeast of the continent."

At this point, Yeongwoo could properly understand the situation in Australia.

Of course, it was impressive that the Red Foot Orcs, who originated as monsters, had taken over the vast northern part of Australia.

However, they hadn't encountered Australia's 'real power' yet.

'Someday, when the big cities of Australia advance north, that will be the time when a great war breaks out.'

However, Yeongwoo didn't want to slaughter the orc army for their sake.

He had already recruited Lord Bantubangtong and believed that the orcs would manage the north better than humans.

'They've already proven it in practice, haven't they?'

Therefore, the strategy Yeongwoo could take was,

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

'To strengthen the Red Foot Orcs so they won't be overwhelmed by the big cities in Australia.'

At least until Yeongwoo himself comes down to mediate.

-There are bigger cities in the southeast?

Bantubangtong's eyes twitched menacingly at once.

Even though he and the Red Foot Orcs were being threatened by Yeongwoo, they prided themselves on being the strongest within the Australian continent.

Hence, the fact that another competitor still remained sparked their inherent belligerent nature.

“You must not.”

-...?

“No more killings. The survival guarantee I propose includes a prohibition on killing.”

After saying this, Yeongwoo looked around to see if there was anything to write with.

Then,

“Goldie, do you have a pen and paper in that pouch?”

He asked the Golden Goblin, the alien who had been by his side the longest.

He wondered if there were pen and paper in his dimensional pouch.

Although he asked without much expectation, surprisingly,

-Kiit!

The Golden Goblin indeed took out a pen and a notepad from the dimensional pouch.

It was because when the goblin took over Yeongwoo's bag, it included items taken from a convenience store.

Yeongwoo had gathered pens and paper from the store, thinking they might be useful someday.

“Oh.”

Receiving the pen from the goblin, Yeongwoo tore off a sheet from the notepad.

Then, he instructed the trumpet player, Pofu Tenta, to support one side of the broken table.

-With a grunt...

Seeing the alien slave Pofu lifting the table with his shoulder, Bantubangtong felt a sense of camaraderie and stretched out his left arm to help lift the table.

-What is he trying to do?

Yeongwoo placed the notepad sheet on the table and wrote something on it.

“Can you read this?”

When Yeongwoo showed the note saying, ‘Orc, illiterate,’ Bantubangtong’s face immediately contorted in anger.

-Do not insult us. You will learn that orcs have things more important than life.

“...So you can read.”

After a brief verification, Yeongwoo tore off another sheet from the notepad, placed it on the table, and asked the Orc Lord,

“How many mutants appear daily in the territory you’ve taken?”

-Six each day. And countless monsters.

“Oh, six daily. Got it.”

That meant there were only six locations in northern Australia that the reset system considered as “valid areas.”

It seemed that originally uninhabited areas were broadly integrated, sending down mutants.

“You must send me 120 million karma daily.”

-...What?

“It might be shocking since it’s the first time you’re being exploited, but other regions are paying too. And they are even the indigenous people of Earth.”

-What? That’s... Are you telling me you are extorting your own kind too?

The concept of exploiting their own kind seemed foreign to the Red Foot Orcs.

“Yes. That’s how Earth operates.”

Yeongwoo replied nonchalantly, then continued,

“You all aren’t humans anyway... In fact, you’re parasites on this planet, aren’t you? So I initially intended to really squeeze you, but I changed my mind.”

Of course, demanding 120 million karma daily from orcs who only had six mutants for income was essentially squeezing them dry.

However, Bantubangtong and the Red Foot Orcs, who were still unfamiliar with Earth's situation, didn't know this.

-Then what are you planning?

"I'll only take a moderate amount of money and help you become a prosperous and strong nation. From now on, the Red Foot Orcs will guard the southern border of the Korean Peninsula. Think of it as a kind of wall."

This time, Choi Moonsoon, who had been standing behind, was so shocked that she shouted,

"What? What are you talking about? Are you really out of your mind?"

But Yeongwoo waved his hand, signaling that it was fine.

"How many Red Foot Orcs are currently in Australia?"

-Approximately 5,000 brothers.

"Five thousand...?"

Yeongwoo was also a bit surprised by this number since it was more than he expected.

Usually, the number of monsters appearing in one area varied from a few dozen to about a thousand, depending on the species.

But 5,000...

"Is it really that many? Did all 5,000 brothers land in Australia together?"

When Yeongwoo asked, Bantubangtong shook his head.

-No. Initially, we were only 307 brothers.

307 brothers.

He was referring to 307 Red Foot Orcs.

So, only 307 Red Foot Orcs had appeared in this country initially.

And one of the vanguard was none other than Orc Lord Bantubangtong.

'So far, everything seems normal.'

Then what happened in a few days for the number of Red Orcs to increase to 5,000?

"So? What did the 307 brothers do?"

-Eradication. We first eradicated the fake brothers.

"Fake brothers?"

Yeongwoo blinked for a moment before quickly understanding.

"You mean mutants?"

-Yes. So, in reality, there were 306 brothers. After eradicating the fake brother, we were left with 230 brothers.

"...Oh."

It was a dry statement, but it was indeed a sad story.

The 307 Red Foot Orcs had fallen into another world together, but it turned out that one among them was a mutant, forcing them into a fierce battle.

A fierce fight in the wilderness.

In the process, Bantubangtong lost 76 brothers.

But Bantubangtong was a more sentimental orc than Yeongwoo expected.

-If one has Red Feet, they are a brother. The fake brother was also brave like a Red Foot. So I decided to bury 77 brothers in my heart that day. In the unfamiliar wasteland.

Though the number of orcs who died that day was 76, he was also counting the brave mutant as a brother.

"Oh... Lord, if you had shared that story in Shandong Province, you would have been called a hero."

Yeongwoo wiped away nonexistent tears, then asked the Red Foot Orc Lord, Bantubangtong,

"Then how did the 230 brothers who survived in the wilderness become this large army?"

They couldn't have grown at an extremely fast pace.

Even Yeongwoo, who had encountered all sorts of bizarre things on Earth, found this particular matter mysterious.

Then Bantubangtong, emerging from his recollection, pointed his thick finger towards the distant wasteland.

-In our city, Darwin, there is a portal.

“A portal?”

A portal.

If the orc wasn't using the wrong word...

“Lord, do brothers come out of that portal?”

In response to Yeongwoo's question, Bantubangtong nodded.

-Every time money is inserted, we can rescue our brothers.

“Unbelievable.”

With that one line, Yeongwoo realized a lot.

The monsters who played the lowest role in the reset world.

When such a monster earned the title of Strongest Sword, they could open a dimensional portal connected to their homeland.

“Lord...? Why do you rescue your brothers? Is something happening where you originally came from?”

Then the orc uttered a word that Yeongwoo never expected.

-Mara.

“Pardon?”

-Mara took over our planet.

[Translator - Night]

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Chapter 270: Highway (5)

Mara.

Among the things that Yeongwoo knew as “Mara,” there was only one entity capable of seizing an alien planet.

Master of the Void, one who walks in the shadow of universal laws.

The King of Ten Thousand Demons.

The troublesome figure he kept getting entangled with.

“Mara was also in your world?”

When Yeongwoo reflexively asked this, Bantubangtong’s eyes twitched this time.

- What do you mean? Could it be that Mara is on this planet as well?

The Lord of the Red Foot, Bantubangtong, looked in disbelief.

- Ah.

Fear and anger alternated in his fierce gaze.

Mara, who had already trampled on their home once before.

That’s why he was so terrified, yet simultaneously, the overwhelming desire for revenge made his chest feel like it would burst.

- Where is Mara now?

“I’m not exactly sure yet. I’m searching.”

Yeongwoo said this and cautiously added,

“However...”

- However?

“There is a place I suspect. A country called China, which is about to go to war with us.”

- China?

Bantubangtong tilted his head.

He didn't know how large a country China was.

- About to go to war? Aren't you the master of this planet?

"Not yet. But I will be soon. And I'll keep my promise to guarantee your survival."

Yeongwoo pointed to the sky with his index finger, referring to the laser bombardment they had seen a moment ago.

-

At this, Bantubangtong began to understand what kind of place this planet was.

- This place is... a world of swindlers.

"I apologize. But I am a swindler with loyalty. I always keep my promises."

This was Yeongwoo's idea of "loyalty."

He always kept his promises and repaid any grace shown to him.

Even if the recipient of his gratitude was a demon or an orc.

"On Earth, this is called 'loyalty.'"

- Loyalty... does that mean swindler?

"...No. It's more like a sense of duty and trust. It's similar to how the lord doesn't betray his 'brothers.'"

- Ah.

"And those who act with such loyalty are called, if young, 'little hero,' and if older or more respected, 'great hero.'"

- Great hero?

"Yes. For example, you would be called Lord Bang, the Great Hero."

- Aha.

According to social norms, Bantubangtong should have asked Yeongwoo's name next and called him 'Great Hero Jeong,' but...

- Hmm.

Bantubangtong did not call Yeongwoo a great hero.

‘This crazy orc bastard?’

Of course, this wasn’t enough to ruin the major deal they were negotiating.

It was a business worth 1.2 billion a day.

And there was a chance they would ally with at least 5,000, potentially growing, orc troops.

“Lord.”

Yeongwoo picked up his pen and called Bantubangtong.

“If you fully cooperate with me, I will approve an orc autonomous territory in northern Australia and ensure that no one on this planet threatens the orcs’ right to survive.”

In essence, Yeongwoo was selling something he didn’t yet have, but Bantubangtong didn’t have a better alternative.

- Fine. But we have one condition.

“Condition? What is it...?”

An unexpected counter.

But the red-footed orc’s condition was much simpler than Yeongwoo anticipated.

- We will also participate in the fight against Mara.

They wanted to take revenge for their homeland here on Earth.

And for Yeongwoo,

“Of course, Lord Bang. You have that right.”

there was no reason to refuse.

Scribble.

Yeongwoo picked up his pen again.

Then he started writing down the guarantee of orc survival on a notepad.

“First, I, Jeong Yeongwoo, will jointly defend the orc autonomous territory in northern Australia.”

- Good.

“However, second, the orc autonomous territory cannot launch a preemptive attack on other regions or countries, and if they must attack for unavoidable reasons, they must notify me.”

This clause considered the major cities in southern Australia, Jeju Island, and even Japan.

Since the reset, Korea-Japan relations had not been properly established.

But unexpectedly, Bantubangtong objected at this point.

- How can it be an autonomous territory if we cannot launch preemptive attacks? We are about to pay you a large sum of money. I think that is enough respect.

“I understand what you mean, but it becomes troublesome if you have attack rights. This planet has billions of humans other than me, and we must consider public opinion.”

He wanted to explain in more detail, but it was getting dark.

This meant that the time for abnormal weather and nighttime dungeons was approaching.

So Yeongwoo needed to rest as soon as possible.

“If you want full autonomy, help me conquer this planet as soon as possible. To do that, we must first defeat a country called China, which is thousands of kilometers away.”

Yeongwoo said this, feeling a lump in his chest.

He could not move the orc troops stationed in Australia to China.

If the entity behind China’s Im Dupyeong was Mara, Yeongwoo sincerely wanted the Red Foot Orcs to join the battle.

But how?

‘I can’t transport 5,000 orcs and their weapons by express shipping. The cost would be astronomical.’

- So what do we do? Is there anything other than paying money?

As Bantubangtong asked this, an emblem of Dogo appeared in the center of Yeongwoo's vision.

Like a computer booting up and showing the OS logo.

Flash!

"Oh...!"

Then a new type of interface appeared.

「The planetary development process will begin now.」

‘Ah, is the company officially intervening now?’

As Yeongwoo blinked rapidly, the next stage proceeded.

「Is the power on the planet unified?」

‘Unified? No.’

Currently, at least two forces could oppose the Korean Peninsula.

There were forces backed by Lemu and Mara, each with their own influence.

‘And there’s no guarantee that one of them isn’t Im Dupyeong. There could be more than three competitors.’

Never forget that Earth was quite vast.

Just this morning, he hadn’t considered that an orc army might be stationed in Australia.

「To unify the planet, what is the top priority that must be addressed?」

‘Top priority?’

As Yeongwoo questioned, the development system displayed a series of items.

[Equip with Anti-Air Defense Capabilities]

[Construct High-Speed Transit Routes]

[Low-Interest Refinancing Loans]

[Equipment Upgrades]

[Deploy Special Defense Forces]

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]

It seemed these were the initial business items that Dogo could pursue.

‘Why is anti-air defense a priority for planetary unification...?’

Of course, on some planets, this might be crucial enough to be a representative task.

But what caught Yeongwoo’s eye was neither anti-air defense nor equipment upgrades.

‘High-speed transit routes...?’

This phrase seemed to directly target his needs.

Hadn’t he been looking for a very fast means of transportation for himself and something to transport the orc army in emergencies?

‘What exactly are high-speed transit routes?’

As Yeongwoo wondered, a detailed explanation appeared.

[Construction of High-Speed Transit Routes]

[Dogo-style highways will be installed across the planet. They can transport most armaments, including living creatures, but construction requires manpower and time.

[These roads are designed to be environmentally friendly and cause no physical damage to the planet’s existing ecosystem. However, accidental casualties may occur during construction.

‘Casualties?’

However, the most important detail was the last part.

[The construction of these roads is simple! Anyone with eyes and a sense of direction can be a constructor.

[But since accidents are likely, we recommend purchasing the company’s constructor pack.

*Constructor Pack: 80 million karma per day.

=2,000 diligent constructors are supplied daily, focusing solely on construction, day and night!

“.....”

Yeongwoo finally understood why Dogo's karma score was so high.

‘Isn't this essentially a slave market...?’

He wondered how vicious the details of the remaining items would be.

After shivering without realizing it, he carefully reread the introduction of the ‘Construction of High-Speed Transit Routes.’

‘A very fast road that can also serve as a supply route... but workers may die during construction.’

In other words, if you value the lives of the planet's residents, you should buy Dogo's constructor pack.

‘80 million karma per day for 2,000 constructors?’

This meant each constructor's danger pay was 40,000 karma per day, which wasn't an exorbitant price.

But.

‘I already have 5,000... no, 5,000 brothers who are constructors?’

Yeongwoo glanced at the Red Foot Orcs lined up behind Bantubangtong.

Seeing this, Bantubangtong also looked at his brothers.

- What is it?

“Lord Bang.”

- Are you planning to swindle again?

“How could I? I just need your help.”

- Speak. If you truly intend to guarantee our survival, you, too, are a Red Foot.

With this, Bantubangtong signaled somewhere within the ranks.

Whoosh.

Soon, some orcs emerged from the ranks carrying a steel inkstone filled with red ink.

It seemed they had some kind of oath-taking ceremony.

So Yeongwoo quickly wrote a new number on his notepad and showed it to Lord Bang.

「8,000」

- 8,000? What does that mean?

“From now on, we’ll only collect 80 million karma daily from the orc autonomous territory in Australia. Instead, use the difference from the original amount to bring more brothers.”

In other words, he meant to increase their numbers by reducing the original amount of 120 million to 40 million.

- Really? Then what’s the catch?

“The road.”

- The road?

“Yes. Please build the road leading to Mara.”

- Mara...!

At the mention of the two syllables that struck the hearts of the exiles, all the orcs, including Bantubangtong, let out fierce roars.

- Mara!

- The road to Mara...!

- The road of revenge!

Of course, they had no idea what they were shouting.

Meanwhile, a design plan and construction process for the ‘High-Speed Transit Routes’ appeared in Yeongwoo’s vision, and it was anything but ordinary.

‘Huh...? An elevated highway?’

Judging by the surroundings shown in the short video of the construction process, this construction would take place hundreds of meters above ground.

However, the bigger issue was the method of connecting the highways.

High-speed constructors would be launched in the direction the road would be laid, and the road would form along their trajectory.

‘Ha, well, without this method, it would take too long.’

Then what would happen to the constructors launched at high speed to lay the roads?

At least, the sample video didn’t reveal what happened afterward.

“.....”

The Absolute Demon of the Korean Peninsula, Jeong Yeongwoo’s eyes grew a bit misty.

Then his arm shot high into the air.

“Revenge road! We’re going to Mara...!”

[Translator - Night]

[Proofreader - Gun]